Nonnus' *Paraphrase* between Poetry, Rhetoric and Theology

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Nonnus' *Paraphrase* between Poetry, Rhetoric and Theology

Rewriting the Fourth Gospel in the Fifth Century

By

Maria Ypsilanti
Laura Franco

With the collaboration of

Filip Doroszewski
Claudia Greco

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Preface

This study is the result of a research program funded by the University of Cyprus. The project springs from a novel idea conceived by the Principal Investigator, Maria Ypsilanti, who then wrote a detailed proposal on the matter, which, after it had undergone rigorous peer review by international experts, received funding. Maria Ypsilanti then recruited and supervised a group of researchers charged with implementing her ideas as outlined in her research proposal and beyond.

The resulting work is a comprehensive study of Nonnus' *Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel* from the point of view of paraphrastic technique. Through an examination of selected representative passages, the work, while focusing primarily on the exploitation of ancient rhetorical theory, also considers more general issues of poetics and of Christian exegesis. During the writing of the book, Laura Franco was the main research collaborator, while Filip Doroszewski and Claudia Greco made specific contributions. Maria Ypsilanti had overall responsibility for the editing of the work, including commenting, correcting and enriching the contributions of her research team. Some of these contributions indeed extended beyond Ypsilanti's initial ideas. For this and for the successful implementation of the research project and the realisation of the book, she is extremely grateful to the members of her team. It should be noted, however, that the chapters of this book where Maria Ypsilanti is an author or a co-author represent her own contributions to the implementation of the project.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A An Evanescent Figure

Two hexametric poems are transmitted to us under the name of Nonnus: the *Dionysiaca*, which recounts the deeds and the adventures of Dionysus, and the *Paraphrase* of the Gospel of John. There is agreement in modern scholarship that they are both ascribable to the same person, a fifth century A.D. poet from Panopolis, whose figure is somewhat enigmatic, given the meagre information on his life. All we know about Nonnus is that he was from Panopolis (modern Akhmim), in the region of the Thebaid (Upper Egypt), and that he lived in Alexandria, where, most probably, he wrote the *Dionysiaca*.[1]

This can be inferred from an anonymous epigram of the Greek Anthology (*AP* 9.198), written in Nonnian style, and attributed to Nonnus himself.[2] It runs:

> Νόννος ἐγώ· Πανὸς μὲν ἐμὴ πόλις, ἐν Φαρίῃ δὲ
> ἔγχεϊ φωνήεντι γονὰς ἤμησα Γιγάντων.
>
> I am Nonnus; my native city was Panopolis, but in Alexandria I mowed down with my vocal sword the children of the Giants
>
> tr. W.R. PATON, *The Greek Anthology, Loeb Classical Library*, Cambridge, MA, London 1916–1918

1 Livrea (1987), pp. 98 ff.; Gigli Piccardi (2003), esp. pp. 45–48.

2 The epigram would stand as a preface to an edition of Nonnus' work. Wifstrand (1933, pp. 166–167) was strongly inclined to attribute it to Nonnus on the grounds of the similarities with the language and style of the *Dionysiaca*. Later Livrea (1987, pp. 110–113 and 1989, pp. 32–35) convincingly confirmed the attribution (which is now generally accepted) and suggested that the epigram introduced an edition of both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* and that the giants mentioned in it refer metaphorically to the opponents of both Dionysus and the Christian God (the heretics). *Contra*, cf. Vian (1976), pp. lvi–lvii, who suggested that the epigram may be an epigraph added by the first editor of the *Dionisyaca*. Cf. also id. (1994), pp. 228–229, n. 169. Recently on this issue, see also Castelli (2017), who, by contrast to Livrea, argues that the authorship of the epigram remains uncertain (esp. pp. 636–638 and 641) and holds that the epigram refers to the *Dionysiaca* only (pp. 642–644).

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Such an assertion seems to be confirmed by the prologue to the *Dionysiaca* (1.13–15), where Alexandria is evoked through reference to the island of Pharos:

> ἀλλὰ χοροῦ ψαύοντι Φάρῳ παρὰ γείτονι νήσῳ
> στήσατέ μοι Πρωτῆα πολύτροπον, ὄφρα φανείη
> ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀράσσω

> But bring me, a partner for your dance in the neighbouring island of Pharos, Proteus of many turns, that he may appear in all his diversity of shapes, since I twang my harp to a diversity of songs.[3]

Located immediately in front of the port of Alexandria, Pharos was a synonym of the city. The adjective γείτων, "neighbouring", attributed to the island, is an autobiographical hint, expressing the point of view of the poet, who lived in the city nearby.[4] The figure of Proteus, the shape-shifting deity who lived on Pharos, is linked to the notion of ποικιλία, a pivotal concept in Nonnus' poetry.[5] Besides the autobiographical elements, this geographical reference offers a plethora of cultural implications and allusions. It was here that the tradition of the *Septuagint* was established[6] and the Alexandrian theological school was inaugurated by Clement (c. 150–215) and Origen (185–254). Here there was a firmly-rooted Neoplatonic tradition—suffice it to mention Synesius (c. 370–413), Hypatia (c. 360–415) and Hierocles (active in the fifth century).[7] In the time of Nonnus, Alexandria was dominated by the figure of Cyril, whose commentary on the Gospel of John, written some time before 428, perhaps between 425 and 428,[8] provides principally (but not exclusively) the exegetical basis for the *Paraphrase*.

Although the *Dionysiaca* presents the longest extant epic poem in Greek from antiquity, the name of Nonnus is hardly found in early Byzantine sources. He is remembered almost *en passant* by the historian and epigrammatist Agathias Scholasticus (c. 536–582),[9] who lived about a century after Nonnus

3 All the English translations of the *Dionysiaca* are by Rouse (1940).
4 Cf. Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 121, n. 13.
5 On which see below in the Introduction, discussion of the *Dionysiaca*.
6 Cf. Livrea (2000), p. 53.
7 Cf. Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 47. On Alexandrian Neoplatonism in general, see also Hadot (1978), esp. pp. 11–13, Aujoulat (1986), esp. pp. 4–9.
8 For an early discussion of the matter, see Mahé (1907), pp. 41–45. Recently, see Johnson (2016), p. 269 with n. 12, Franchi (2016), p. 243.
9 Agath. *Historiae* 4.23,5–6, p. 152 Keydell (R. Keydell, *Agathiae Myrinaei historiarum libri quinque*, Berlin 1967). The quotation is quite vague: Agathias cites a couple of verses by

and refers to him as one of the "new poets" who treated the myth of Marsyas.[10] After Agathias' brief remark, a surprisingly long silence engulfs Nonnus' name in later Byzantine literature, to the point that one is tempted to suspect that this unconventional poetic personality, who interestingly mixed pagan and Christian culture, perhaps caused the Christian establishment some embarrassment. The name of Nonnus does not appear in the manuscript tradition. Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonica (c. 1115–1195), in his commentaries on Homer and on Dionysius Periegetes, inaccurately quotes a few lines from the *Dionysiaca*, without mentioning the name of the author.[11]

As Accorinti recently pointed out, there is no mention of Nonnus in Photius' *Bibliotheca*,[12] nor is he recorded in any specific entry in the *Suda*, apart from a brief note at the end of the headword Νόνναι[13] in the *Marcianus gr.* 448 (containing this tenth century Byzantine lexicon), which is likely to be an addition by the hand of Eustathius of Thessalonica himself, who copied the manuscript.[14] Moreover, in the *Etymologicum Magnum* a few verses of the *Dionysiaca* (9.11–12 and 19–24) are quoted anonymously in a discussion of the etymology of the name Dionysus.[15] Eventually, in the late Byzantine period, Maximus Planudes (c. 1255–1305) copied the *Dionysiaca* as an *adespoton* (in *Laur.* 32.16) and the *Paraphrase* in the *Marcianus gr.* Z 481. Here the *inscriptio* attributes the poem to the philosopher and rhetorician Ammonius, but in a short comment added by Planudes it is specified that, according to other sources, the work is by Nonnus.[16]

Nonnus' Egyptian origin has a crucial bearing on his literary training.[17] We know that during Late Antiquity hexametric poetry flourished in Egypt. The

Nonnus (*Dion.* 1.42–43), adding that he does not remember the context from which they are taken. On this issue, see Baldwin (1986) and Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 33.

10 The allusion to the "new poets" does not have a chronological meaning, but rather refers to the "modernity" of Nonnus' poetry. See Gonnelli (2003), pp. 9–10, and Agosti (2004), p. 74, n. 27.

11 See Accorinti (2016), p. 21 and n. 33 and Tissoni (2016), p. 699.

12 Accorinti (2016), pp. 16–19.

13 Νόνναι, as the Roman *Nonae* in the calendar, after which Νόννος Πανοπολίτης is mentioned as λογιώτατος· ὁ καὶ τὸν παρθένον Θεολόγον παραφράσας δι' ἐπῶν.

14 Accorinti (2016), pp. 19–23. In this marginal gloss Nonnus is mentioned as the author of the *Paraphrase*. The fact that Eustathius himself was the scribe who copied the manuscript is now safely confirmed. See Accorinti (2016), p. 21.

15 Cf. Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 32, and Tissoni (2016), p. 699.

16 Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 108, see also De Stefani (2016), p. 674. For Planudes' notes on, and interventions in the text of, the *Dionysiaca*, see Wilson (1983), p. 240, Sherry (1996), pp. 412–413.

17 Even though the poet lived in Egypt, it is likely that he was of Syrian background. His

popularity of this genre can be inferred from the famous quotation from Eunapius' *Lives of Philosophers and Sophists*, where it is stated that the Egyptians were very enthusiastic about poetry.[18] It is also evident in the extant documentation concerning the work of a large number of Egyptian poets, who were principally from the Upper Thebaid. The documentation goes back to at least the third century A.D. This evidence, which includes ancient inscriptions, papyri, and medieval manuscripts (albeit often fragmentary), offers a complex picture of the rich poetic background from which Nonnus emerged.[19]

The concentration of poets, who mostly dealt with mythological subject-matter, in the relatively small area of Panopolis and its surroundings is remarkable. Triphiodorus (third-fourth century A.D.), Nonnus, Colluthus (fifth-sixth century A.D.) and, most probably, Musaeus (sixth century A.D.) are all native to this region and, although they belong to different periods, share similarities in style and metrics. Apart from epic poetry, other poetic genres flourished in the area, too, as is indicated by the work of Cyrus of Panopolis (c. 400–470), to whom several poems in the *Palatine Anthology* are attributed.[20]

It has been argued that Nonnus was a travelling poet.[21] This label is suitable for a number of Egyptian "wandering poets", a well-known definition coined by Alan Cameron,[22] referring to figures such as Cyrus of Panopolis, Pamprepius, Andronicus of Hermoupolis, Christodorus, Olympiodorus of Thebes, and other intellectuals,[23] all of Egyptian origin, who, supposedly, moved about so as to participate in poetry festivals and competitions. Nonnus shares his geographical and cultural background with this group of poets, but he cannot be easily

name, Νόννος, perhaps of Syrian origin, meaning "pure" or "holy", and in Byzantine Greek also "monk", is well attested in Egypt and in Asia Minor and Greece (see C. Bonner, "Two notes: I. The Names Nonnus, Nonna" *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 40 [1954], pp. 15–17). It has been also argued that the name Nonnus is of Greek origin; see Accorinti (2016), pp. 24–25, with n. 42.

18 Eunapius *VS* 493 pp. 510–512 (W.C. Wright, *Loeb Classical Library*, Cambridge, MA, London 1968).

19 On this topic, see the exhaustive work by Miguélez Cavero (2008), in particular, pp. 35–83.

20 On Cyrus see L. Mecella, *Ciro di Panopoli. Potere politica e poesia alla corte di Teodosio II* (Catania-Rome 2020); Miguélez Cavero (2008), pp. 29–31.

21 L. Robert, "Documents d'Asie Mineure", *BCH* 101 (1977), p. 113, n. 29.

22 Cf. Cameron (1965), esp. pp. 476–477, 484–485, and its revised version, Cameron (2016), pp. 1–35. See also Agosti (2002), pp. 74–75, Accorinti (2016), p. 25.

23 They were essentially and primarily poets, but they could also work as *grammatici*, and they were usually involved with politics and diplomacy, in certain cases playing important institutional roles as consuls or prefects. See Cameron (2016), in particular, pp. 26–29. Similarities between the style of Nonnus and the style of Cyrus were noticed as early as Friedländer (1912), pp. 48–49. Cf. also Baldwin (1986), p. 60.

described as one of them. Given the scarcity, if not absence, of biographical data, it is difficult to tell how far he may have been a travelling poet, possessing the characteristics of these fellow—countrymen of his. However, it has been suggested that Nonnus could have travelled outside Egypt, namely to Berytus, because his vivid and detailed description of the city suggests personal experience.

In the *Dionysiaca* there are descriptions of three towns, Nicaea, Tyre and Berytus.[24] The accounts of Tyre and Berytus are rich in details and it therefore might be assumed that the poet had a direct knowledge of them. This is especially true for Berytus,[25] where Nonnus locates no fewer than three books of the *Dionysiaca* (41–43), which deal with the story of Dionysus' failed attempt to seduce the eponymous nymph of the city, Beroe. On these grounds, Livrea suggested that Nonnus had been a student at the law school of Berytus, renowned throughout the whole Empire.[26] However, all his poetic descriptions of towns are fashioned in accordance with the fundamental rules of the *ekphrasis*, as codified in ancient rhetorical treatises. Not only do Nonnus' descriptions seem to be the result of the application of rhetoric,[27] but, in some cases, they also reveal the influence of other literary works.[28] This makes it even more difficult to determine to what extent such poetic descriptions can be regarded as based on autobiographical experiences.

Notwithstanding the lack of biographical data, it is generally accepted that, despite the pagan content of his major poem, Nonnus was a Christian.[29] An

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24 *Dion.* 16.403–405 (Nicaea); *Dion.* 40.311–326 and 345–355 (Tyre); *Dion.* 41.14–49 and 43.129–132 (Berytus).

25 Keydell (1936), col. 905; Chuvin (1991), pp. 196–197; Accorinti (2004), pp. 20–25; Drbal (2012), pp. 238–239. For a refutation of this view, see Hernández de la Fuente (2017), pp. 358–359.

26 Cf. Livrea (1989), pp. 28–29. Gregory of Nazianzus praises directly Berytus, calling the city "the famous citadel of agreeable Phoenice, the seat of Roman customs", τερπνῆς / Φοινίκης κλυτὸν ἄστυ, νόμων ἕδος Αὐσονιήων (PG 37.1538,2–3), where νόμων seems to convey an allusion to the celebrated school of law of the city. The school was probably founded after A.D. 212. See further Rochette (1997), pp. 167–174. For this and for other schools of the periphery teaching Roman law, see Cribiore (2007), pp. 57–58.

27 See Lauritzen (2012), pp. 189–199, for Tyre, and pp. 199–208, for Berytus.

28 For example, in the case of Tyre, the echo of Achilles Tatius' description of the city (2.14.3–4) is clear. Cf. also Chuvin and Fayant (2006), p. 10, Agosti (1998), pp. 197–199 and *passim*, Accorinti (2004), p. 22. It has been also suggested that the description of Berytus may owe something to Claudian's *Patria*, now lost, composed for this city. Cf. Cameron (1970), pp. 9–10. Despite its literary character, Nonnus' description is realistic and accurate in visual terms (see Chuvin and Fayant 2006, p. 4).

29 See, for instance, D'Ippolito (1994), p. 197, Chuvin (2014), pp. 3–4, with nn. 4, 5, Johnson (2016), pp. 267–268, Accorinti (2016), p. 37.

intriguing, albeit controversial, hypothesis was put forward by Livrea, who suggested that Nonnus was actually the Bishop of Edessa, who performed the spectacular conversion of the most famous harlot of Antioch, the actress Pelagia.[30] According to the legend, after her repentance she confined herself in a cell on the Mount of Olives to live as a hermit, disguised as an eunuch. The dates of the tenure of office of the Bishop of Edessa (449–451 and 457–471) and the dates of the poet of Panopolis do indeed fall within the same span of time. However, if the *Life* of Pelagia depends on a homily by John Chrysostom (*In Matthaeum* 67–68, PG 58.636–637) that refers to the conversion of a famous harlot from Antioch, whose name is not mentioned and who lived in the fourth century, it is difficult to accept Livrea's fascinating thesis.[31] Identification with other Nonni cannot be easily accepted.[32]

B Dates and Chronology

Nonnus' date has been, and still is, the object of scholarly debate. Not much information can be drawn from his works.

The only safe *terminus post quem* for the *Paraphrase* is represented by the monumental commentary on the Gospel of John, written, as we have seen, between 425 and 428 by Cyril of Alexandria, which certainly constitutes the most important and indisputable theological background to the *Paraphrase*. It is from this work that Nonnus, who, as has been demonstrated in the past, follows Cyril's theology closely,[33] extrapolates and re-elaborates the exegesis of

30 The view that Nonnus of Panopolis was the same person as Nonnus, Bishop of Edessa, was held by Livrea (1987), esp. p. 113, and id. (2000) esp. pp. 56–66. This thesis was strongly criticised by Cameron (2000), to which Livrea responded with "The Nonnus Question Revisited", in Accorinti-Chuvin (2003), pp. 447–455. See also the revised version of Cameron's article in Cameron (2016), pp. 81–90. Accorinti is skeptical: see Accorinti (2016), p. 34. For the debate on the matter, see also Chuvin (2014), p. 4, n. 5, and Johnson (2016), p. 269, n. 12.

31 This is not the only controversial point: the debate on the matter is far more complex and includes several arguments in favour and against, on which cf. again Livrea (2003) and Cameron (2016).

32 Such as the deacon who acted as a notary at the Council of Chalcedon, among other persons bearing this name. See the review of Hernández de la Fuente (2017), pp. 357–358.

33 Grillmeier and Hainthaler (1996), pp. 95–99; Livrea (1989), p. 30, n. 29; Golega (1930), pp. 127–130. *Contra*, see Sieber (2015), pp. 43–46, and (2013). Sieber's analysis of Nonnus' Christology (i.e., Christological titles as well as relations between Son / Logos and the other two persons of the Trinity) led him to conclude that the poet was not as ardent a follower of Cyril, as it is widely suggested. A survey on Cyril is Russell (2000); on his theological

innumerable Johannine passages. Another indication formerly used to support a *terminus post quem* for the composition of the *Paraphrase* is the presence of the term Θεοτόκος,[34] which is connected with the Christological controversy on the double nature of Christ and with the conflict between Nestorius and Cyril of Alexandria. The fact that the Virgin is called "mother of God" could be taken to suggest a date later than 431, when Cyril's theological doctrine prevailed in the Council of Ephesus and this epithet was officially adopted by the Church. However, the date of the Council is not decisive, as the term is also attested earlier, and cannot be taken as an absolute criterion of dating.[35]

On the other hand, a possible *terminus ante quem* for the *Paraphrase* is usually thought to be 451, when the Council of Chalcedon definitely condemned Monophysite doctrines, thus marking the separation of the Church of Alexandria from the Constantinopolitan patriarchate. The Nonnian presentation of Christ's "majestic" divinity has been regarded as being incompatible with this condemnation,[36] and the composition of the *Paraphrase* has thus been dated between 444 and 451.[37] This view, too, has been challenged and some critics do not think that the Council of Chalcedon is necessarily a *terminus ante quem*.[38] One view that reconciles both sides of the controversy assumes that the *Paraphrase* was written within the period between the forties and the sixties of the fifth century.[39]

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positions, see further Wessel (2004), Van Loon (2009). An early overview of Cyril's commentary on St. John's Gospel with regard to its dating is Mahé (1907), pp. 41–45.

34 Θεητόκος, referring to the Virgin at *Par.* 2.9 and 66 and 19.135.

35 For the inadequacy of this criterion, see Accorinti (2016), p. 31. For the use of θεοτόκος earlier, for instance, in Gregory of Nyssa, see the review in Mateo Seco and Maspero (2009), pp. 477–478. For a more general overview, see Livrea (2000), pp. 166–168, Russell (2000), p. 232, n. 15. For a discussion of θεοτόκος, see further below, *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, a. The Virginity of Mary and John the Apostle. Mary Θεοτόκος.*

36 Livrea (1989), p. 25. For these chronological issues, see also Livrea (2000), p. 53, and De Stefani (2002), p. 9.

37 Livrea (1997), p. 108; id. (1989), p. 30. Earlier, Stegemann (1930, p. 208) dated the *Paraphrase* to c. 440.

38 Sieber (2017). Sieber holds that the phrase Χριστοῖο θεητόκος, for the Virgin Mary, points to an era in which the controversy between Χριστοτόκος and Θεοτόκος had disappeared, that is, the post-Chalcedonian period. The phrase, however, should not necessarily be interpreted as indicating the disappearance of the dogmatic opposition between Nestorius and Cyril; see below, *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, a. The Virginity of Mary and John the Apostle. Mary Θεοτόκος.* Earlier, Cameron (2000, p. 182) supported a "mid-fifth century" date, not necessarily pre-Chalcedonian.

39 Johnson (2016), p. 269.

We can postulate some other dates on the basis of the *Dionysiaca*. A plausible *terminus post quem* is given by the work of the Egyptian poet Claudian (c. 370–404), because Nonnus probably knew his works, particularly his Greek *Gigantomachy*.[40] Equally feasible is the *terminus post quem* offered by the *incipit* of an epigram by Cyrus of Panopolis (*AP* 9.136), datable to 441–442, which is quoted twice in the *Dionysiaca*.[41] A secure *terminus ante quem* rests on Agathias' reference mentioned above,[42] together with five folios of a papyrus codex of the sixth century (*P.Berol.* inv. 10567) which contain a section of the *Dionysiaca* from books 14–16.[43] To this evidence, two poems can be added, one attributed to Pamprepius and the other one anonymous, both datable between 471 and 473, and both clearly influenced by Nonnus' style.[44] Furthermore, it has been suggested that 444, the year of Cyril's death, may be a possible *terminus post quem*, since the influential Bishop of Alexandria would not have approved of the publication of a blatantly pagan poem written by the same person who had interpreted the Gospel of John in the light of his commentary.[45] On these grounds, the life of the poet can probably be placed sometime between 400 and 470[46] and the composition of the *Dionysiaca* may possibly be dated between 450 and 470.[47]

A controversial issue in any treatment of Nonnus' life is his religious faith. The difficulty lies in the coexistence of two poems, one openly pagan and one indisputably Christian, by the same author (whose very name, it has to be noted, rather suits a Christian).[48] The issue has triggered numerous scholarly discussions and different assumptions have been made. In the first half of the last century, it was maintained by various critics that Nonnus was a pagan who, at some stage of his life, converted to Christianity.[49] The opposite idea,

40 Cameron (1970), pp. 11–18. See further Accorinti (2016), p. 28.

41 See Friedländer (1912) pp. 44–46, Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 18, Tissoni (2016), p. 692. See further Accorinti (2016), p. 29. The hemistich is quoted in *Dion.* 16.321 and 20.372.

42 See above, with n. 9.

43 Vian (1976), p. lxi; Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 25; Accorinti (2016), p. 30, De Stefani (2016), p. 673.

44 The one attributed to Pamprepius being the *Encomium on the Patrician Theagenes* and the anonymous one being the *Encomium on Heraclius of Edessa*. See Accorinti (2016), p. 30 and Miguélez Cavero (2008) pp. 72–74 (no. 54) and pp. 68–69 (no. 46).

45 Livrea (1987), p. 108; id. (2000), p. 53.

46 Cameron (2000), p. 182.

47 This is the view of Vian (1976, pp. xv–xviii). See also D'Ippolito (1987), p. 758.

48 See the discussion of Dostálová-Jeništová (1957), esp. p. 34.

49 Bogner (1934), pp. 320–321, 331–333; Collart (1930), pp. 8–15; Keydell (1936), cols 909–911, Cameron (1965), p. 476.

that he was a Christian apostate, has also been suggested.[50] The issue is also associated with the relative dating of the two works. A number of critics have argued on stylistic grounds that the *Paraphrase* was written first.[51] If we accept the conjecture that Nonnus converted to Christianity, the *Dionysiaca* must have been composed earlier than the *Paraphrase*.[52] Other critics maintain that the two works were written simultaneously.[53] Critics now generally do not accept either hypothesis, conversion or apostasy.

In more recent times, scholars have been more inclined to reconcile the opposing views of paganism and Christianity,[54] especially in the light of the cultural syncretism that characterised the Neoplatonic Alexandrian milieu.[55] From this perspective, Nonnus can be regarded in various ways: as a Christian, who was familiar with pagan mythology and wrote the *Dionysiaca* with an antiquarian attitude devoid of any ideological involvement;[56] as a "lay" poet, mainly interested in the narrative and in the literary engagement of his work;[57] or as a Christian who saw the Dionysian mysteries as propaedeutic for the reception of the Christian message, and the salvific god Dionysus as a prefiguration of Christ.[58] Modern scholars think that the two poems are indeed the work of one and the same author,[59] notwithstanding the view, argued in

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50 Dostálová-Jeništová (1957), p. 35.

51 See further Shorrock (2011), p. 50, Dijkstra (2016), p. 81, De Stefani (2016), pp. 671–672. The first critic who challenged the traditional view of the priority of the *Dionysiaca*, Vian (1976, pp. xii–xv and xvii), was inclined to accept the priority of the *Paraphrase*, but still did not find the evidence coming from stylistic observations strong enough to support such a view with certainty. Later, Vian supported the priority of the *Paraphrase* more firmly (1997, esp. pp. 157–158).

52 See further Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 16.

53 See Shorrock (2011), pp. 51–52, Massa (2014), p. 30.

54 For a detailed discussion of Nonnus' cultural and religious background, which accommodated the coexistence of diminishing paganism and spreading Christianity, and for a review of the bibliography, see Dijkstra (2016). For slightly later times, cf. the work of Choricius of Gaza, a Christian, who values traditional education and praises the persons whom he honoured through his speeches for the combination of Christian virtues and Greek *paideia* which characterised them. See Greco (2011), pp. 96–100 and *passim*.

55 This point of view was already expressed by Golega (1930), pp. 80–88. The idea that the unity of Nonnus' poetic inspiration can be explained by syncretism is also maintained by Volpe Cacciatore (1980), pp. 41–45 and 48, Gigli Piccardi (1985) pp. 212–213, ead. (2003), p. 82, Livrea (1989), p. 31, id. (2000), pp. 54–55. See also Franchi (2016), p. 246.

56 Cameron (2000), pp. 175–188, and (2106), pp. 81–90, esp. p. 85. Also, cf. Liebeschuetz (1995), p. 207.

57 Vian (1994), pp. 223–224 and 227–229.

58 Livrea (1987), p. 122; id.; (2000), pp. 74–76.

59 For a review of modern scholarship, see Bernabé and García-Gasco (2016), p. 96. See also Chuvin (2014), p. 4.

the past and revived relatively recently,[60] that the two works cannot be attributed to the same person.

One may attribute the poems to the same person not only in view of their strong stylistic similarities, but also because they contain numerous recurrent themes. These appear in both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* and are employed with such consistency, that scholars have excluded the possibility that they are the work of different authors.[61] Because of these recurring similarities, some Nonnian critics are inclined to believe that the two poems were composed in parallel,[62] but the chronological relationship between the two is still debated. There is general agreement on that the *Paraphrase* was composed around the middle of the fifth century and, even among those who accept that the two poems were composed at the same time, there is a tendency to believe that Nonnus started work first on *Paraphrase* and later on the *Dionysiaca*.[63]

C The *Dionysiaca*

The forty-eight books of the *Dionysiaca* recount the deeds of, and the myths related to, Dionysus, starting with the god's genealogy and birth and then illustrating his expedition to India, the war with the Indians and the numerous battles that led to the defeat of his antagonist Deriades. These are followed by the return of Dionysus to Europe and his apotheosis. Because of this structure, which is based on antecedents, birth and deeds, death and apo-

60 Sherry (1991), pp. 51–70 and *passim*, id. (1996).

61 See, for instance, Agosti (1998), p. 212, and id. (2003), p. 45, quoting, as examples of corresponding episodes, the healing of the blind in the ninth Book of the *Paraphrase* and the miracle of the blind man in *Dion*. 25.281–291, the well of Jacob in *Par*. 4.11–74 and that of Danaus in *Dion*. 4.249–284 (on which see Gigli Piccardi 2003, p. 353), the resurrection of Lazarus in the eleventh Book of the *Paraphrase* and that of Tylus in *Dion*. 25.451–552. For other correspondances, such as the similarity of the image of Christ walking on the waters with Isis' performance of the same act, and for analogies between the births of Christ and Dionysus, see Spanoudakis (2016), pp. 608–624 and Shorrock (2016), pp. 581–590 respectively. See also below, *C. The Dionysiaca*, end of section.

62 For instance, Livrea (1987), p. 102, id. (1989), p. 23; id. (2000), p. 56; De Stefani (2002), p. 6; Agosti (2003), p. 45.

63 For instance, Vian thought that the *Paraphrase* antedates the *Dionysiaca* (Vian 1997, pp. 157–158), but conceded (p. 160) that at some point the two works might have been composed at the same time. Also Cameron (2000), pp. 178–181, and in the updated version of the article (2016) at pp. 83–84, accepts the view that the *Paraphrase* was composed earlier. See also Shorrock (2001), p. 129.

theosis, it has been suggested that the poem is modelled on the pattern of the βασιλικὸς λόγος (the "royal encomium", codified by Menander Rhetor).[64] This view, first formulated by Stegemann and subsequently elaborated on by a number of authoritative scholars,[65] was rejected by Keydell, Bogner and Collart,[66] on the grounds that the poem does not strictly follow the scheme established by Menander, in that it contains countless digressions and small narrative units, which may give the impression, at least, of a general lack of unity.[67]

However, more recent studies suggest that the *Dionysiaca*, far from being a series of episodes totally lacking in inner cohesion, rest on an overall sound and solid structure,[68] which allows the presence of numerous *excursus* without loss of consistency. Moreover, the digressions, which are present throughout the poem to an exceptional extent and vary greatly in terms of length and function, offer the poet endless opportunities to narrate different versions of myths, including even their least known variants. This variety of mythical material not only increases the encyclopaedic character of the poem but also makes for the development of a huge variety of parallel stories, which are very much in tune with the poet's taste for ποικιλία.[69] The prologue to the *Dionysiaca*, briefly discussed above, shows clearly that this is the focal element in Nonnian poetics. Here a complex network of allusions suggests the subject and aim of the poem. Nonnus' acknowledgment of Homer as the initiator of the epic genre is made clear from the *incipit* of the poem,[70] which introduces the programmatic

64 For Menander's section on the βασιλικὸς λόγος, see Russell-Wilson (1981), pp. 76–94.

65 Stegemann (1930), pp. 209–231 and later Vian (1976), pp. xx–xxi. See also Lasek (2016), p. 403 with n. 12.

66 H. Bogner, review of Stegemann (*Gnomon* 1931), pp. 177–192; Collart (1930), pp. 276–277; Keydell (1936), cols 909–910.

67 Lack of unity: Collart (1930), p. 61, Keydell (1936), *passim*. For a review of older scholarship on this topic, see also Tissoni (2016), pp. 708–709.

68 Vian (1976), pp. xl–xli; Duc (1990), esp. 189; Agosti (2004), p. 462. Even D'Ippolito, who interpreted large sections of the *Dionysiaca* as a sequence of epyllia, clearly states that in Nonnus' poetry two tendencies coexist: that of the vast epic poem and that of the Hellenistic epyllion. The critic thus acknowledges the unity of the poem. See D'Ippolito, *Studi Nonniani: L'epillio nelle Dionisiache* (Palermo 1964), esp. p. 42.

69 See Geisz (2016), esp. pp. 173–175.

70 The invocation to the Muses is traditional and, even though not literal, it is a Homeric quotation: εἰπέ, θεά, Κρονίδαο διάκτορον αἴθοπος εὐνῆς (*Dion.* 1.1). See Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 116. It should be also mentioned that the reference to Homer recurs again in the second programmatic prologue of the *Dionysiaca* (25.8): τελέσας δὲ τύπον μιμηλὸν Ὁμήρου. For the programmatic importance of this second invocation to the Muse and reference to Homer, see, for instance, Castelli (2017), p. 634.

statement that clarifies the subject of the poem: the deeds of Dionysus.[71] The key-element, which implies the idea of ποικιλία, is represented by the figure of Proteus. This marine deity was traditionally thought to live on the island of Pharos,[72] and his metamorphic nature (ποικίλον εἶδος)[73] embodies the idea of stylistic variety. This concept is evoked in the subtle rephrasing (ποικίλον ὕμνον) of a verse by Pindar,[74] who is, together with Homer, one of the most influential models for Nonnus' poetry[75] and whose style is characterised *par excellence* by ποικιλία.[76]

Beneath this monumental poem lies an ambitious poetical vision that includes the whole literary tradition inherited from Greek culture, which is both a model and a challenge. The most representative figure of this *paideia* is indisputably Homer, who is openly evoked in the two proems of the *Dionysiaca*, one at the beginning and one in the middle,[77] as the ultimate and unrivalled model for epic poetry.[78] Besides Homer, Nonnus' poetry presupposes deep knowledge of all the traditional poetic genres, from archaic lyric (Pin-

71 *Dion.* 1.1–10.

72 *Od.* 4.355 and 385.

73 See Gigli Piccardi (1993), esp. pp. 230–231, where it is convincingly argued the reason why the conjecture ψαύοντα, in line 13, is to be preferred to the dative ψαύοντι. See also ead. (2003), pp. 120–121, and Faber (2016), pp. 445–446.

74 Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 121, note 15, quoting Pind. *Nem.* 5.42 ποικίλων ἔψαυσας ὕμνων. Also, Gigli Piccardi (2017), p. 259.

75 Explicitly mentioned in the second prologue of the *Dionysiaca*: 25.21 Πινδαρέης φόρμιγγος ἐπέκτυπε Δώριος ἠχώ. See also Verhelst (2017), p. 7.

76 Gigli Piccardi (2003), p. 107, quoting Eustathius' commentary on Pindar, in which ποικιλία is listed among the arrows of the poet's bow. On this topic, see M. Negri, *Introduzione al commentario a Pindaro* (Brescia 2000), pp. 176ff. (esp. p. 190). The principle of ποικιλία is praised by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as a characteristic of Herodotus' style in *De Thucydide*, 23.41 and in *Epistula ad Pompeium Geminum*, 3.11 and 3.12. See also Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 166. For Nonnian ποικιλία, see also Lasek (2016), pp. 402–403 and *passim* and Miguélez Cavero (2016), pp. 550–552. For Nonnian ποικιλία through figures of speech (antitheses, oxymora, etc.) in descriptions, see, for instance, Lauritzen (2012), p. 195; in regard to *ekphrasis*, see Agosti (2008), p. 21, and Lindsay (1965, pp. 379–384) who associates it with the actual ποικιλία of gardens and vegetation, *inter alia*.

77 *Dion.* 1.1–44 (esp. 37–38) and *Dion.* 25.1–30 (esp. 8–10). Nonnus inserts a second proem exactly in the middle of his poem, in accordance with the conventions of epic tradition: in Homer there is more than one invocation to the Muses after the initial proem (e.g. *Il.* 2.484–493; 11.218–220; 14.508–510), as happens also in the poem of Apollonius (1.1ff.; 3.1–5; 4.1–5), who also placed a second proem in the middle of the *Argonautica*. In the *Dionysiaca*, Homer is directly invoked six times. See Bannert and Kröll (2016), p. 484.

78 On the use of the Homeric poems in the *Dionysiaca*, see, for instance, Shorrock (2001), *passim*; Bannert and Kröll (2016).

dar and his metaphorical *periphrasis*, above all)[79] to tragedy and comedy and from Hellenistic poetry[80] to later epic poetry (the didactic poems of the Oppians, Triphiodorus' *Sack of Troy*, Quintus' *Posthomerica*, etc.)[81] and prose (especially the novel).[82]

The variety of Nonnus' sources also includes Christian literature. Even though the references to the literary Christian tradition are more evident and numerous in the *Paraphrase*, themes and literary reminiscences related to Christian literature are present in the *Dionysiaca*, too, where they are often interwoven with pagan themes. This is particularly evident in such instances as the metamorphosis of Ampelus and his resurrection in the shape of a vine,[83] and, even more significantly, the episode involving the raising of the dead Tylus,[84] which displays notable similarities with the resurrection of Lazarus. There are also striking similarities between Dionysus' turning of the water into wine at Lake Astacis and the description of the miracle performed by Jesus at the Wedding in Cana, which, in turn, is rich in Dionysian vocabulary. The correspondences between the pagan and the Christian poem are manifest in the resemblances between the two central figures of Dionysus and Christ. Furthermore, similarities can be also observed in minute details, such as the choice of similar vocabulary, epithets and turns of phrases employed for characters and episodes that echo one another in the two poems.[85] This web of allusions and parallel references suggests a unitary conception that links the two works together as parts of the same wide syncretic vision.

79 See Gigli Piccardi (2017), pp. 255–270, esp. p. 264.

80 On the influence of Hellenistic Poetry on Nonnus, see, for instance, Hollis (1976), Acosta Hughes (2016) and Massimilla (2016).

81 Maciver (2016).

82 Miguélez Cavero (2016).

83 This topic was recently investigated by Shorrock (2016), pp. 590–599. On Ampelus, see also Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 41–42. Spanoudakis points out that, notwithstanding the similarities between the episode of Lazaurs and the metamorphosis of Ampelus, the latter episode does not involve the idea of salvation. Another episode which seems to be connected to the Lazarus narrative is that of Staphylus, on which ibid., pp. 43–46.

84 Cf. Spanoudakis (2014b), esp. pp. 47–52.

85 To mention only a couple of examples: the same expression (ψαύουσα τραπέζης) is used for the mother of Dionysus, Semele, and for the Virgin Mary at *Dion.* 8.417 and 25.117 and *Par.* 2.10, respectively. A line describing the miracle of the water turned into wine recurs almost identically in the description of the miracle of the Wedding at Cana and that of Lake Astacis: *Par.* 2.36 (χιονέην ἤμειψε φυὴν ἑτερόχροον ὕδωρ) and *Dion.* 14.413 (χιονέην ἤμειψε φυὴν ξανθόχροον ὕδωρ). See further Livrea (2000), pp. 76–85, Massa (2014), p. 250.

D The *Paraphrase*

Nonnus' *Paraphrase* is a re-elaboration of the Gospel of John in twenty-one books of hexameters, which correspond to the chapters of the Fourth Gospel. John's text is followed closely and re-elaborated faithfully, without any deviation in terms of content and sequence of events. As we have already mentioned, Nonnus probably began composing the *Paraphrase* before he started on the *Dionysiaca*, and the *Paraphrase* was drawn up in Alexandria at the same time as the *Dionysiaca* was composed.[86]

The rhetorical exercise of paraphrase was a common school practice in antiquity. It was normally taught by grammarians (γραμματικοί) as part of the preliminary training designed to teach students how to compose declamations (προγυμνάσματα). Paraphrase is commended as a particularly effective exercise in various rhetorical text-books, and especially in Aelius Theon's *Progymnasmata* (15 Patillon-Bolognesi, pp. 108–109, surviving in its Armenian translation) and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (10.5,4–11). Theon explains that paraphrase consists in rewriting the great models of the past, so that their meaning becomes more comprehensible and that its usefulness lies in the process of expressing the same ideas in different forms. Quintilian describes it in similar terms. This practice of the paraphrase writing also continued in Christian culture, as it continued to be part of the syllabus.[87] The rhetorical background to the *Paraphrase* will be discussed in detail below.[88]

Paraphrase extended beyond school and we do have examples of rephrasing of important works of Classical and Hellenistic literature. These are the literary paraphrases.[89] Surviving paraphrases of texts of pagan antiquity include the paraphrases of Nicander, Oppian and [Oppian] by Eutecnius (A.D. III–V) and the paraphrases of Aristotle by Themistius (A.D. IV).[90] Content put aside, an obvious difference between all of them and Nonnus' work is that these are

86 Livrea (1987, esp. p. 109) supposes that the cultivated pagans of Alexandria represented the audience of the *Paraphrase*. Also Agosti (2003, pp. 95–102) thinks that Nonnus probably composed the *Paraphrase* in Alexandria.

87 For paraphrase (also) in the context of schools, see Roberts (1985), pp. 6–7, 37–60. For the fact that both Christian and pagan intellectuals received the same classicising education in the fourth century, and in Late Antiquity, more generally, see, for instance, Marrou (1965), pp. 460–467, Dijkstra (2016), pp. 78–79.

88 *II. The Rhetorical Background to the Paraphrase in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Treatises.*

89 See Roberts (1985), pp. 54–60. On the distinction between grammatical, rhetorical and literary paraphrase, see Roberts (1985), pp. 40–58.

90 Themistius paraphrased Aristotle's *Analytica posteriora*, *Physica* and *De anima*. See the discussion of Pignani (1982), pp. 21–22, and Zucker (2011), § 2.1.

prose paraphrases (either of poetic works, the paraphrases of Eutecnius, or of prose works, the paraphrases of Themistius), while Nonnus produced a poetic paraphrase of a prose text, thus clearly aiming to achieve a significant artistic result. Nonnus was not a pioneer in this: we know, for instance, that Nicander produced a hexameter verse *Metaphrasis* of the Hippocratic *Prognostics*.[91] From a formal point of view and mainly as regards extant works, Nonnus' task displays close parallels with a group of Greek Biblical paraphrases of the fourth and fifth century,[92] which are few in number, compared with their Western equivalents. This poetic genre developed in both halves of the Mediterranean, starting from the fourth century, and although much more extensively attested in Latin culture, it is also represented in Greek Christian literature as well.

A fair number of pieces of Greek Christian epic poetry survive.[93] Such are the Biblical poems by Gregory of Nazianzus, the *Christus Patiens* (controversially attributed to Gregory, and generally considered to be a later Byzantine text, dated as late as in the eleventh or twelfth century)[94] and the hexametric metaphrasis of the Psalms by one Apollinaris (unconvincingly identified with Apollinaris of Laodicea).[95] This work has received due attention in a number of studies,[96] but the basic questions it raises (authorship, chronology, cultural environment) and the textual condition of its almost five thousand difficult hexameters still make it a rather obscure work. While we have a *Metaphrasis of the Ecclesiastes* ascribed to Gregory the Wonderworker in the third century, probably the first Biblical paraphrase (which is in prose),[97] the

91 According to Suda, s.v. Νίκανδρος. We also know from Suda (s.v. Μαριανός) that a Marianos of the fifth century A.D. produced iambic metaphrases of Theocritus, Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, Aratus, Nicander. See Zucker (2011), § 2.6.

92 On Greek Biblical epic in the fourth and fifth century, see Agosti and Gonnelli (1995), esp. p. 291, pp. 301–305 and pp. 360–367, Agosti (2001). See also Whitby (2016), p. 218.

93 See Livrea (1989), pp. 36–38, Agosti (2001), p. 67, Nazzaro (2001), p. 121. On Nonnus and Biblical epic, see also Whitby (2016), esp. pp. 216–219.

94 For the different schools of thought, which attributed the poem to authors of the fourth / fifth c. or of the eleventh / twelfth c., see Pollmann (2017), pp. 145–149.

95 See Agosti (2001), p. 87, with n. 103, Nazzaro (2001), p. 121. Cf. Gonnelli (2001), p. 398 with n. 17.

96 J. Golega, *Der homerische Psalter* (Ettal 1960); F. Gonnelli, "Il Salterio esametrico, I–II", *Koinonia* 13 (1987), pp. 51–60, 127–151; Agosti (2001), pp. 85–92; C. de Stefani, "La Parafrasi di Giovanni di Nonno e la Metafrasi dei Salmi dello Pseudo-Apollinare: un problema di cronologia", in Audano (2008), pp. 1–16; M. Ugenti, *La parafrasi del Salmo I nella* Metafrasi dei Salmi *attribuita ad Apollinare e nel* Carme *7 di Paolino di Nola: due tecniche a confronto*, in M.E. Consoli (ed.), *Società, diritto e letteratura nel tardoantico: atti della I Giornata di studio, 30 Ottobre 2008* (Galatina 2011).

97 Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 65 *Theodorus, qui postea Gregorius appellatus est, Neocaesareae Ponti episcopus* (…) *scripsit et μετάφρασιν in Ecclesiasten brevem quidem, sed valde utilem.* See

corpus of Biblical paraphrases was enriched by the discovery of the so-called *Codex Visionum*,[98] a manuscript from the Bodmer collection.[99] This includes, along with various visionary texts, the most important of which is the *Vision of Dorotheus*,[100] a number of shorter poems of different genres. Among these pieces are further examples of this flourishing Christian hexametrical production, such as the *ethopoea* of Cain (based on *Gen*. 4.13–15 but not quite a paraphrase),[101] the *ethopoea* of Abel (based on of *Ps*. 101 but not quite a paraphrase), the fragments of a hymn (on the structure of *Ps*. 146–150, the so-called "Psalms of the Alleluia"). Eudocia's *De Sancto Cypriano* (the paraphrase of a prose narrative)[102] and the Homeric centos in their different redactions[103] represent further examples of such flourishing Christian hexametrical production. As already noted, Biblical epic did not survive as a genre, if we exempt a few Byzantine examples, such as the paraphrase of *Job* by Leo the Philosopher,[104] and Cometas' epigram on Lazarus' resurrection.[105] Among all these Biblical poems, the most comparable to Nonnus' *Paraphrase* is the *Metaphrasis of the Psalms*, written probably between 450 and 470.[106] Both poems are full and systematic rephrasings of Biblical text, rather than merely developments

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B. Clausi, "L'altro Gregorio. Intorno alla tradizione agiografica latina sul Taumaturgo", in B. Clausi, V. Milazzo (eds.), *Il giusto che fiorisce come palma. Gregorio il Taumaturgo fra storia e agiografia* (Rome 2007), 191 and 197; Nazzaro (2001), p. 121.

98 Discussions of the poems in Hurst and Rudhardt (2002), G. Agosti et al. (eds.), *Papiri Bodmer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in Greco, copto e latino nell'egitto tardoantico*, *Adamantius* 21 (2015). See also Miguélez Cavero (2013a). For the most important poem of the collection, the *Vision of Dorotheus*, see Hurst, Reverdin and Rudhardt (1984).

99 Possibly coming from the region of Panopolis: see Agosti (2001), p. 71.

100 See Kessels and Van Der Horst (1987).

101 See also Agosti (2005), pp. 57–58.

102 C. Bevegni, *Eudocia Augusta, Storia di S. Cipriano*. Con un saggio di N. Wilson (Milan 2006) (with bibliography). See also Miguélez Cavero and McGill (2018), p. 264.

103 Editions: A.L. Rey, *Patricius, Eudocie, Optimus, Côme de Jerusalem, Centons Homériques*. Sources chrétiennes 437 (Paris 1998); M.D. Usher, *Homerocentones Eudociae Augustae* (Leipzig 1999); Schembra (2006); id. (2007a); id. (2007b). The *Homerocentones*, recounting sacred history in Homeric verses, are transmitted to us in four different redactions. Empress Eudocia revised a version by Bishop Patricius. On Eudocia, see A. Cameron, "The Empress and the Poet: Paganism and Politics at the Court of Theodosius II", *YCS* 27 (1982), pp. 217–289, and its revised version in Cameron (2016), pp. 37–90, esp. pp. 65–70; Agosti (2001), esp. pp. 75–85.

104 L.G. Westerink, "Leo the Philosopher: Job and Other Poems", *IllClassStud* 11 (1986), pp. 193–222; C. Crimi, "Una nuova testimonianza su Antistene? (Leone il Filosofo, 'Giobbe', vv. 598–601)", *Orpheus* 9 (1988), pp. 338–343.

105 Caprara (2000).

106 See Miguélez Cavero and McGill (2018), p. 264.

of short segments of a Biblical text (the *ethopoeae* of Cain and Abel, which are not, furthermore, paraphrases in the strict sense), elaborations on Christian themes by means of tragic vocabulary (*Christus Patiens*), or paraphrases in the cento form (Eudocia).[107] Comparison of Nonnus' work with the *Metaphrasis* would be a separate study in itself and is beyond the scope of the present study.[108] Here it is enough to briefly note that the two poets have a similar technique as regards employment of epic diction, which accords with the baroque trends in poetical taste in Late Antiquity, but varies at least as regards how far each expands on the original; expansion is significantly restricted in the *Metaphrasis*.[109]

As for Latin Bible epic, several examples survive. As regards New Testament epic, we have Juvencus' paraphrase of the Gospels in dactylic hexameters, probably written late in the reign of Constantine,[110] Proba's *Cento vergilianus de laudibus Christi*, a poem recounting the deeds of Christ in Vergilian hexameters (mid-fourth century),[111] Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* (fifth century) and Arator's *De actibus apostolorum* (sixth century). Old Testament poems include the paraphrase of the *Heptaeuch* by an author known as "Cyprianus Gallus" (end of fourth / beginning of fifth century), the *Alethia* by Claudius Marius Victorius (fifth century), written for didactic purposes, and the six books in Latin hexameters by Avitus of Vienne (c. 507) *De spiritalis historiae gestis*. Dracontius' *De Laudibus Dei* (fifth century) is a very free composition loosely based on the Bible.[112] We also have three poems based on Psalms 1, 2 and 136 by Paulinus of Nola (fourth-fifth century); this author also wrote *Laus Sancti Iohannis* (*Carm.* 6.1–26), based on Luke 1.[113]

As Nonnus does with Homer and other poets, the Latin Bible poets also draw on the Latin epic past for vocabulary and imagery.[114] Moreover, like Nonnus,

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107 Literary meaning "patchwork", the cento is the result of a poet's effort to "recombine parts of verses from one author's works in order to create a new, unexpected sense, while at the same time moving (almost) exclusively within the metrical and lexical material of this author" and in antiquity it was not regarded as forgery (see Pollmann 2017, p. 102).

108 Faulkner (2014) offers interesting insights on this topic.

109 See further Faulkner (2014), p. 195 and *passim*.

110 Perhaps around 329; see McGill (2016), p. 5.

111 See Herzog (1975), pp. 14–51, Miguélez Cavero and McGill (2018), pp. 267–268.

112 See, for instance, Deproost (1997), pp. 16–18, Arweiler (2007), pp. 147–148.

113 For indicative brief comments of the *laus*, as regards its paraphrastic technique, see Faulkner (2014), pp. 206–207. For an overview of Paulinus' production, see also Miguélez Cavero and McGill (2018), p. 271 and, for a more detailed analysis, Witke (1971), pp. 75–101.

114 For echoes of Ovid and Virgil, and, to a lesser extent, Statius in Juvencus, see Green (2006), pp. 50–71; for Virgil in Juvencus, see McClure (1981), pp. 314 and 319, n. 67, Nazzaro (2001),

these poets are also engaged in religious *interpretatio* and can also express anti-heretical views.[115] However, like other Greek Bible poems, the Latin epics also differ from Nonnus' (and the Psalterion metaphrast's) task in that they are not based on one sole text which they paraphrase faithfully. For instance, Sedulius' poem is an adaptation of the information given by the Synoptics, taken mainly from Mark and Matthew, to a lesser extent from Luke and to an even lesser extent from John, although it does not follow the order of any of these narratives strictly.[116] Arator's narrative is also a selection of the episodes of the Acts.[117] Avitus treats the Old Testament episodes in similar fashion and incorporates elements from New Testament narratives in them.[118] The *Heptaeuch* poet and Juvencus are the most "straightforward paraphrase makers"[119] in comparison to the others, because their poems follow the Biblical text more closely. Still, however, unlike Nonnus, Juvencus is based principally on Matthew, while combining elements from Luke and John.[120] Although generally very faithful, "Cyprianus" also occasionally abbreviates his vast Old Testament material.[121] Thus, Nonnus' work is quite unique, since it is the only extant New Testament poetic paraphrase in both Greek and Latin which, for all its exegetical and other additions and embellishments, rephrases one Gospel, with no insertions from the others, and stays faithful to its chapters and to the order and content of its information from beginning to end.

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pp. 134–135; for Ovid and Virgil in Sedulius, see Malsbary (1985), pp. 68–69, Green (2006), pp. 209–226; for Virgil, Catullus, Lucan, Statius in Arator, see Green (2006), pp. 296, 321–350; for Virgil in Victorius, see Witke (1971), p. 158, Malsbary (1985), pp. 69–73; for Virgil and Horace in Paulinus, see Witke (1971), pp. 87–89.

115 For Dracontius' exegetical comments, see, for instance, Nodes (1993), pp. 45–55, Arweiler (2007), pp. 157–172. For Avitus, cf., for instance, the brief remarks of Hoffmann (2007, pp. 140–142), on Book 3, and Nodes (1984) and (1993), pp. 55–73. For "Cyprianus", see Nodes (1993), pp. 26–36. For Sedulius, see Nazzaro (2001), pp. 141–143, 146–152. Sedulius' anti-Nestorian agenda has been demonstrated by critics. Cf. Green (2006), pp. 141–142, 239–242, 315. For Juvencus' anti-Arianism, see Green (2006), pp. 117–120 and McGill (2016), p. 20. For Arator's similar stance, see Green (2006), pp. 313–317. As regards Nonnus, Hadjittofi has recently argued, by contrast to what is traditionally held, that certain passages of the *Paraphrase* can be read both in the Orthodox spirit and also in a freer way, which allows heterodox interpetations. See Hadjittofi (2018).

116 For a schematic outline of the correspondences between *Carmen Paschale* and the Gospel passages, see Green (2006), pp. 180–183.

117 See Green (2006), pp. 274–279.

118 See, for instance, Nodes (1984), Hoffmann (2007), pp. 139–140.

119 Malsbary (1985), p. 55.

120 See Deproost (1997), p. 18, Green (2006), pp. 24–26, 28–29.

121 See, for instance, Malsbary (1985), p. 62.

The reason why so many Christian authors chose epic metre for their rendering of Biblical texts has been the object of much scholarly debate. As far as Greek poems are concerned, it has been suggested that the practice might be traced back to the notorious edict promulgated by Julian in June 362, which prohibited Christian professors from teaching pagan classics in schools of rhetoric. Supposedly responding to this interdict,[122] Christian intellectuals are reported to have written poems of Christian content in accordance with the modes of pagan epic poetry.[123] However, it is hardly convincing that Christian paraphrase descends from this alleged poetic production, given the very short life of the edict[124] and also given that Gregory the Wonderworker had already composed a Biblical paraphrase in the third century, as we have seen above. Furthermore, surviving paraphrases do not seem to be addressed to an audience of students, but rather to a public already competent both in the Scriptures and in the Homeric poems.[125] The audience of the Nonnian *Paraphrase* was in all probability very similar, if not identical, to that of the *Dionysiaca*: a mixture of Alexandrian pagan intellectuals and cultivated Christians who knew the Holy Scriptures, but who were also cultivated enough to appreciate the numerous allusions to Classical literature present in Nonnus' re-elaboration of the Fourth Gospel and welcomed the "transformation" of the Gospel into epic style.[126] It should be noted that a part of conservative Chris-

122 See Deproost (1997), p. 16.

123 Sozomenus (*Hist. Eccl.* 5.18) speaks of Apollinaris, who undertook the task of elaborating on Old Testament themes using Homeric, Pindaric or dramatic style. Socrates (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.16) speaks of two Apollinarii, father and son, who changed Biblical texts into hexameter and dramatic style (the father) and Platonic (the son). See also Livrea (1989), pp. 26–27, Spanoudakis (2016), p. 604, and next note.

124 Maraval (1997, p. 15) observed that Apollinaris tried to create "une 'littérature' chrétienne sur le modèle de la classique". However, the information given by Sozomenus and Socrates (see prev. note) seems to be exaggerating, and these writings, if they existed, should not have been paraphrases in the strict sense. See further the discussion of Agosti and Gonnelli (1995), pp. 363–365 and Agosti (2002), pp. 76–77. The edict was recalled in January 364. Wilson (1983, p. 10) describes this movement as anyway limited and isolated and never repeated. See also Marrou (1965), pp. 463–465, Kaster (1988), p. 72.

125 See Agosti (2001), esp. pp. 69 and 83.

126 Cf. the similar practice in Latin. We know of Lactantius' claims that the plain style of the Gospels was not suitable for educated readers (*Inst.* 5.1,15) and we also know of his suggestion that elevation of the Gospels' style through splendour of language would make the Gospels more easily acceptable by these readers (*Inst.* 1.1,10). Such views necessitated the production of paraphrases such as the poems of Juvencus, Proba, Avitus: see, for instance, McClure (1981), pp. 307–308, McGill (2016), pp. 23 and 32 (nn. 109, 110). For the more general issue of the dialogue between classical education and Christian belief and to what extent and in which manner the former became the vehicle for the latter in East and West

tians rejected any retelling of the Bible and disapproved of attempts to transform the original text into "Hellenic" poetry. However, works such as Nonnus' *Paraphrase* and the *Metaphrasis* of the Psalms show that this attitude was not universal.[127]

If pagan tradition, both Classical and Hellenistic, represents a background common to both poems, Christian literature has a more crucial part to play in the *Paraphrase*. It has been argued that the exegetical element is predominant in this work, which should be thus considered an exegesis rather than a simple paraphrase.[128] The importance of the commentary to the Gospel of John by Cyril of Alexandria is unquestionable: Nonnus follows this interpretation very thoroughly, as is demonstrated in all critical commentaries of the *Paraphrase*, to the extent that it can be postulated that he "had the commentary *ante oculos*".[129] In the turbulent age of Christological controversies, the authority of the influential patriarch of Alexandria was a guarantee that Nonnus' interpretation of the Johannine Gospel would not deviate from Orthodox doctrine.

Cyril's influence can be detected either directly, in instances of poetic vocabulary which reproduces his prose or, more loosely, in the general concept underlying Nonnus' rendition of the *Vorlage*.[130] However, Cyril was not the only patristic source Nonnus was familiar with. Indeed, the poet's theological background comprehends a wide range of authors,[131] among whom is John Chrysostom (in his homilies on the Gospel of John)[132] and perhaps Theodore of Mopsuestia (fourth-fifth century A.D.), who wrote a commentary on John with which Nonnus may have been familiar.[133] A further possible, though far from

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and in the writings of individual authors, see the discussion of Kaster (1988), pp. 70–95 and Witke (1971), *passim*. For a brief account of the state of affairs in Late Antiquity, in which the poetic and artistic aesthetics of the pagan world and the rhetorical education played their role in the formation of the intellectuality of Christians, see, for instance, Witke (1971), pp. 149–155.

127 Moreover, it has been suggested that in the course of time the "Hellenising" of the Bible became gradually more appreciated and Nonnus' work was influential towards this direction. The suggestion was made by Livrea (1989), pp. 26–28. See further the discussion of Spanoudakis (2016), pp. 602–604.

128 Agosti (2003), p. 111.

129 Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 18.

130 Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 18–19.

131 For the richness and diversity of Nonnus' sources, see the recent discussion by Simelidis (2016), esp. pp. 290–298, and the observations of Franchi (2016), p. 244. See further below, esp. *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, passim*.

132 For a discussion of the extent of the influence of Chrysostom's commentary on Nonnus, see Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 20–21.

133 On Theodore of Mopsuestia, see Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 20. His commentary is pre-

certain, influence is that of Origen.[134] Moreover, in certain instances Nonnus gives interpretations of the Gospel which must either have appeared in sources not transmitted to us[135] or are his own exegesis.[136] Alongside the Christian theological tradition, in re-elaborating the Fourth Gospel, Nonnus often takes elements from the Synoptic Gospels and combines them with the Johannine diction,[137] most probably on the grounds that the Fourth Gospel was thought to complement the other Gospels, and the general practice of exegetes was to use the Synoptics to elucidate the Johannine text.[138]

As far as other literature is concerned, Gregory of Nazianzus is a source whose presence in Nonnian poetry can hardly be underestimated. His orations and poems were certainly known to the poet of Panopolis, as is demonstrated both from single words and from phrasing and also from metrical practice.[139] The influence of Gregory of Nyssa has been also discerned in the *Paraphrase*.[140] For possible knowledge of Epiphanius of Salamis (fourth c.) and other views echoed in the Acts of the Ecumenical Councils, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, C. Explanations* and *H. Interptetatio, passim*. It has also been argued that similarities of ideas and vocabulary between Nonnus' work and the *Tübingen Theo-*

served in Syriac translation (Conti-Elowsky 2010, pp. xx–xxv), although some Greek fragments do survive, as well. Although it has been observed that even by the time of Ephesus, i.e. the summer of 431, Theodore was already "a bogeyman for the whole Cyrilline party" (McGuckin 1994, p. 100), certain similarities between Theodore's commentary and the *Paraphrase* can be actually discerned. After pointing out a number of resemblances between Theodore's commentary and *Par.* 11, Spanoudakis (ibid.) suggests that the *Paraphrase* may have been composed after Cyril's commentary (428) and before Cyril's pamphlet against Theodore (*Contra Theodorum*) in 438. For a possible example of influence of Theodore (albeit not as regards his commentary on John), see below, *IV. Amplificatio, D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 1. The Raised Serpent, The (healing) Saviour, Eternity*. Other similarities between the *Paraphrase* and Theodore's commentary are discussed *passim*.

134 For a parallel, see Golega (1930), p. 125. See also below, *IV. Amplificatio, C. Explanations, 2. Place-Names of Theological Significance*, discussion of Siloam and *passim*.

135 Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 21–22, mentions other commentaries surviving in fragments only, such as those by Theodore of Heracleia and Ammonius.

136 Simelidis (2016), p. 295.

137 Spanoudakis (2014b, p. 17), observes that even in the Lazarus episode, which is not recounted in the Synoptics, there are traces of them. An example of Nonnus' use of the Synoptics is the description of John the Baptist in *Par.* 1.15, where the poet merged together elements of the Baptist's description in them. See De Stefani (2002), p. 119.

138 Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 17.

139 D'Ippolito (1994), pp. 202–208, Simelidis (2016), pp. 298–306. For a review of earlier scholarship on the topic, see D'Ippolito (1994), pp. 198–200.

140 See Franchi (2017), pp. 197–198, with regard to Nonnus' debt to Gregory for the theme of the "living water".

sophy, a collection of texts mostly hexametrical and partly pagan and partly Christian, dated to the fifth or sixth century,[141] can be attributed to the common Alexandrian milieu in which both works were composed and perhaps to Nonnus' knowledge of collections of oracles incorporated in the *Theosophy*.[142]

We can presume that one of the reasons why Nonnus chose to paraphrase the Fourth Gospel, which is constructed around the crucial principle of the divine Λόγος, was probably its strongly spiritual and philosophical character, which attracted the interest both of Alexandrian Neoplatonic circles and of theologians such as Cyril.[143] A Neoplatonic background is evident in the vocabulary employed by Nonnus, both in the *Dionisyaca* and in the *Paraphrase*, but in the latter work it also serves the purpose of elucidating theological concepts. Roberta Franchi observed that the philosophical foundations of Nonnus' work are characterised by a "thoroughgoing eclecticism combined with religious syncretism", so that it is difficult to draw a line between theology and philosophy.[144] The influence of Neoplatonism can be generally detected in both poems, in terms of a common knowledge of mainstream philosophical principles and terminology the educated elite was familiar with,[145] but also with reference to specific literary sources, among which feature Plotinus and possibly Proclus.[146]

With its abundance of literary echoes, Nonnus' poetry comes across as a multi-faceted ensemble of allusions and reverberations deriving from an astonishing variety of different traditions. In this complex picture, writings belonging to the Orphic tradition[147] also seem to have exerted some influence on the poet's imagery, even though is not easy to determine how much. For example, despite the fact that there are significant similarities to the *Argonautica Orph-*

141 For a discussion of the various "layers" or phases of the collection, see Tissi (2018), pp. 4–11, esp. 9–11. For the dating, see Tissi (2018), p. 19.

142 See Gigli Piccardi (2012) §§ 41, 43 and below, *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, b. The Persons of the Trinity as Self-Begotten.*

143 See Franchi (2016), pp. 242–243. See also Volpe Cacciatore (1980), pp. 45–48.

144 Franchi (2016), p. 246.

145 Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 31–37. Hernández de la Fuente (2014), esp. pp. 230–231.

146 On Neoplatonic terminology in Nonnus' poetry, see Hernández de la Fuente (2014), pp. 245–248. For possible echoes of Neoplatonism in the *Paraphrase*, see Greco (2004), p. 92, with reference to the scene of the foot washing. See also Franchi (2016), p. 246. For stylistic parallels between Nonnus and Proclus' hymns, see Friedländer (1912), pp. 50–52, De Stefani (2002), p. 21 (although it is still a matter of debate whether Nonnus was influenced by Proclus or vice versa).

147 See Bogner (1934), pp. 323–326, Vian (1994), p. 216 with n. 103, Bernabé and García-Gasco (2016), pp. 97–110 and (with regard to the orphic hymns), M. Otlewska-Jung, "Orpheus and Orphic hymns in the *Dionysiaca*", in Spanoudakis (2014a), pp. 77–96.

ica, these elements are not sufficient to form any conclusions about whether Nonnus drew on this anonymous poem or rather from some other Orphic text circulating in the Imperial period.[148]

E Nonnus' Influence: A Brief Overview

Nonnus' influence on later literature has often been examined. It is commonly accepted that, thanks to public recitations of both his works, Nonnus' poetry had become a classic by the second half of the fifth century and all the important poets of that period and of the next century, such as Musaeus, Colluthus, Christodorus, John of Gaza, Paulus Silentiarius and Agathias, were his followers.[149] Imitations of the Nonnian style and echoes of his poems' content are also discernible in certain Byzantine authors, although hexameter verse is gradually replaced by iamb from the sixth century onwards.[150] Rennaissance scholars, editors and poets showed interest in Nonnus. As far as poetic production is concerned, Poliziano (fifteenth century), Jean Dorat (sixteenth century) and Giambattista Marino (sixteenth-seventeen century) are, for instance, inspired by myths and episodes in the *Dionysiaca*.[151] In the later Renaissance, however, there was criticism of Nonnus' style and the structuring of his pagan epic.[152] French painters of the seventeenth century, such as Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, show traces of the influence of Nonnian subjects[153] and Spanish scholars and poets of the same period seem also to have been acquainted with the work of Nonnus.[154] A Greek prose paraphrase of the *Paraphrase* was written in the eighteenth century, proving that the work was read and appreciated at the time, the manuscript itself being preserved on Mount Athos (*Dionysiou* 326).[155] In modern times, Wolfgang Goethe, Percy Shelley and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in the nineteenth and Marguerite Yourcenar and Constantine Cavafy in the twentieth century are probably the best known authors to take an interest in Nonnus.[156]

148 Livrea (2014), *passim*. For this conclusion, p. 76.
149 See Tissoni (2016), pp. 691–695.
150 See Tissoni (2016), pp. 696–700.
151 See Tissoni (2016), pp. 701–705 and 710–711.
152 Such as those of Cunaeus and Heinsius; see Tissoni (2016), pp. 706–709.
153 See Hernández de la Fuente (2016), pp. 719–721.
154 See Hernández de la Fuente (2016), pp. 725–730.
155 See Franchi (2012a), esp. p. 81. Franchi edits Chapter Nine. Chapter Six is edited also by Franchi (2013, pp. 228–234) and Chapter Two is edited by Livrea (2000, pp. 124–129). The manuscript is still unedited, as a whole.
156 See Hernández de la Fuente (2016), pp. 731–732–737, 740.

F Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity

Although there are no programmatic statements concerning poetics in the *Paraphrase* equivalent to those in the *Dionysiaca*, the substantial correspondences between the two poems, in terms of style, themes and echoes, evident and repeatedly noted by critics,[157] suggest that there is a sound theoretical coherence in the two works. The literary project underlying the Christian poem is reflective of that of the *Dionysiaca*, or, more probably, the two works are intended to complement each other. Both poems, different as they may be in terms of content, belong to the same poetic *genre*, that of epic poetry, i.e., poetry realised by means of dactylic hexameter verse, and they both address a similar audience, which includes Christian and pagans.

Ancient authors felt indebted to the genres to which their works belonged and regarded themselves as subject to the laws regulating such genres.[158] These ties represented a constraint and a challenge at the same time, as the ability of a skilled poet consisted in both mastering the codified language characterising a poetic category (as well as the rules established by the tradition), and in displaying originality within these conventions. In this sense, Nonnian poetry is paradigmatic, in that he succeeded in innovating within the tradition, as is demonstrated by the *Dionysiaca* and perhaps even more clearly by the *Paraphrase*, in which he revives the epic genre by infusing it with Christian themes expressed in a language highly indebted to the Classical and Hellenistic poetic tradition. According to Rossi,[159] four characteristics determine the genre to which a poem belongs, if we disregard music and dance, as these do not always apply: subject-matter, structure, language and metre. In terms of all, except subject-matter, the *Paraphrase* is an epic. Because of its subject-matter, which is neither heroic nor didactic, according to the ancient Greek sub-divisions of the epic genre, it becomes (as regards ancient conventions) a "new" kind of epic.

As mentioned above, rhetoric, which was taught through school exercises (*progymnasmata*) of increasing difficulty, is an essential part of the foundations of both Nonnian works. This aspect has possibly an even more crucial

157 E.g. Livrea (1987), esp. pp. 98–102; id., (2000) esp. p. 56; Gigli Piccardi (2003), esp. pp. 45–60.

158 It is difficult to determine the extent to which Greek poets were aware of these rules, written and unwritten. On this issue see the important article by Rossi (1971), esp. pp. 71–74.

159 Rossi (1971), p. 71.

bearing on the *Paraphrase*, because of the genre to which the poem belongs, since paraphrasing is, by definition, a rhetorical operation. Among this set of exercises *ethopoea* and *ekphrasis* are particularly important in Nonnus' poetry. *Ethopoea*, namely the plausible representation of a character, was a very common and basic school practice consisting of imagining what kind of words would have been pronounced on a specific occasion. The exercise might involve a speech of exhortation, consolation, farewell, seeking forgiveness or other topics and students would have to find words to suit the proposed situation. *Ethopoea* could also relate to historical figures, such as kings or political leaders, or mythical figures, such as the heroes of the Trojan War, or even deities. The piece was usually composed in prose (even though very often it re-elaborated poetic material),[160] but poetic *ethopoeae* are also attested in papyri.[161] This technique, theorised in ancient rhetorical treatises,[162] is extensively employed by Nonnus in the *Dionysiaca*, where numerous characters deliver speeches whose structure is indebted to the rules of *ethopoea*.[163] Agosti observed that one of the most characteristic traits of the *Dionysiaca* is the frequency of direct speeches that deviate from the flow of the narration.[164] This is a typical feature of late antique poetry, which developed a taste for very refined and self-contained compositional units placed within the contexts of a wider framework.[165] This breaking of the continuity of the narration through the insertion of smaller, *tesserae*-like segments[166] is less evident in the *Paraphrase*, as the poem is conditioned by the structure of the hypotext. Nevertheless, the influence exerted by the practice of *ethopoea* is evident also in the *Paraphrase*, especially in the characterisation of the protagonists of the Gospel account. When describing figures such as Peter, Mary Magdalene, Pontius Pilate and Judas, Nonnus gives a more sensitive and complex description of his characters, in comparison to the concise description of the *Vorlage*.[167]

Related to the rhetorical practice of *ethopoea* is *ekphrasis*, also widely employed by Nonnus, a device which, like *ethopoea*, contributes to the cre-

160 See Agosti (2005), pp. 34–35.
161 Agosti (2005), p. 37 and pp. 43–44.
162 See further below, *IV. Amplificatio, G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note.
163 See again Agosti (2005), pp. 45–50 and 56.
164 Agosti (2005), p. 46.
165 This sort of style and aesthetic conception are described by Roberts (1989).
166 The analogy between late antique poetry and mosaic technique has been discussed by Roberts (1989), who compares poetical small units to the *tesserae* in a mosaic (p. 70).
167 See below, *IV. Amplificatio, G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note and *passim*.

ation of the impression of fine poetical segments set in a wider narrative structure. Literary miniatures describing clothes and textiles or paintings and other depictions were particularly favoured by Alexandrian poets. The theory and the technique of describing a given object were codified in ancient treatises of rhetoric, in which *ekphrasis* was apparently one of the most basic exercises normally taught during the first stages of rhetorical training. The presence of *ekphrases* is much more pervasive in the *Dionysiaca* than in the *Paraphrase*.[168] In the former, free from the constraints represented by the *Vorlage*, Nonnus makes profuse use of this device, not only because of his rhetorical training but also because of his familiarity with Greek novels (especially Achilles Tatius), in which literary descriptions of diverse subjects are particularly abundant.[169] However, in his Christian poem, too, this taste for descriptive insertions is an important poetic and exegetical feature, though to a more limited extent. The original function of *ekphrases* was both to please the reader and to persuade the audience.[170] Likewise, Nonnus' vivid descriptions in the *Paraphrase* enhance the interpretation of the Johannine diction, as graphic representations lay stress on specific ideas through the use of particularly strong images, suitable for the paraphrast's purposes.

With regard to the practice of *ekphrasis*, all rhetorical treatises lay much emphasis on the importance of the vividness (*enargeia*) of the language employed in the description of a given object.[171] In ancient theory, *enargeia*

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168 Cf. Agosti (1989), p. 212. On Nonnus' poetry of *ekphrasis*, see, for instance, Drbal (2012), p. 231 and *passim* (for cities), Faber (2016).

169 See, for instance, Miguélez Cavero (2016), pp. 572–573.

170 See, for instance, Webb (2009), pp. 131 and 143–145.

171 Theon (Patillon-Bolognesi 7, pp. 66–69) defines *ekphrasis* as descriptive language, bringing what is portrayed clearly before the eyes. It may describe persons, such as Thersites in Homer (*Il.* 2.217–218), or exotic animals (cf. Hdt. 2.68–76), objects, events or time. There can also be mixed *ekphraseis*, as happens in Thucydides (2.2–5), where a night battle is described, for night is a time and battle is an event. Ps.-Hermogenes (*Prog.* 10.6, p. 203 Patillon) also defines *ekphrasis* as a descriptive speech, which can be single or mixed and lays special emphasis on the fact that it should be characterised by vividness (*enargeia*). Aphthonius (37–41 Rabe) also agrees that it is a descriptive language bringing what is shown clearly (ἐναργῶς) before the eyes. *Ekphrasis* applies to persons and things, occasions, places and animals, and can be single or compound. Aphthonius also devotes a separate section to the description of citadels and stoas (in fact describing the *Serapeum*); Nicolaus (67–71 Felten) also defines *ekphrasis* as a descriptive speech and recommends that it should bring what is described *clearly* before the eyes; John of Sardis (215–216 and 223–227 Rabe) comments that *ekphraseis* are the most useful for all three species of rhetoric: encomia, judicial speeches and deliberations, adding that a relaxed style should be used, adorned with different figures. For the ancient theoretical background of the *enargeia* in *ekphraseis* in particular, see further Zanker (1981), pp. 301–302, Roberts (1989),

is defined as "when an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass before your eyes".[172] This essential quality of style contributes to the effectiveness of the rhetorical speech that enables it to render absent things present.[173] For Quintilian, *enargeia* is accomplished in two ways: by the representation of the *tota imago* through words and by the great number of details which express this image.[174] The desire to visually portray scenes, actions and persons is evident in both Nonnian poems and in the *Paraphrase* it plays a significant role in the representation and interpretation of the Gospel text. Nonnus employs both the approaches described by Quintilian, in that his phrasing frequently creates images in the reader's mind and in that this procedure normally involves some verbal expansion of the *Vorlage* in which characteristic descriptive details are added.[175]

In the literary tradition, Nonnus' poem has been defined as μεταβολή.[176] In modern languages, the term "paraphrase" is used to indicate the process by which the language and the style of a given model are changed, so that a different literary outcome is achieved, without, however, any distortion of the meaning of the original text. The rhetorical strategies of the paraphrase, according to Theon, on which Nonnus also relies on, are the following: *adjectio* (addition), *detractio* (omission), *transmutatio* (the rearrangement of words and phrases), and *immutatio* (the substitution of one or more words with other

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pp. 39–41, Goldhill (2007), pp. 3–7. With regard to Nonnus, see Agosti (2014a), *passim*, and id. (2008), esp. pp. 17–26.

172 *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.55,68, the translation given in Roberts (1989), p. 39. Cf. Webb (2009), p. 105: *enargeia* refers to "a quality of language that derives from something beyond words: the capacity to visualise a scene"; Zanker (1981), p. 297: it is the stylistic effect in which "circumstances are described in such a way that the listener will be turned into an eyewitness".

173 Webb (2009), pp. 87–106.

174 *Inst. Or.* 8.3,63, 8.3,66. See Roberts (1989), p. 40.

175 In particular, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, D. Imagery with Theological Significance*, esp. *4. Presentation of Christ in Danger and in Suffering as King*, discussion of *Par.* 18.34–39, the description of John the Baptist (*E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 1. Description of John the Baptist and his Baptism*) and *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note and *passim*.

176 On this definition, see Ernesti (1983), s.v. μεταβολή, p. 211, and μετάφρασις, p. 217. See also Pignani (1975), esp. p. 223, where a peculiar etymology of the term μεταβολή is mentioned, suggested by Eustathius of Thessalonica in his comment to the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 10.156 = III 42, 17–21). According to this, μεταβολή should refer to the activity of exchange (μεταβάλλειν) in trading. On the sometimes overlapping concepts of *paraphrasis* and *metaphrasis*, see Pignani (1982), pp. 29–30, and Zucker (2011), § 2.3. See also Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 2: "strictly speaking, it is a Μεταβολή not a Μετάφρασις".

words). The Greek terms are ἔνδεια, πλεονασμός, μετάθεσις, ἐναλλαγή.[177] Nonnus actually carries out his literary paraphrase mainly by means of *adjectio*, combined with *immutatio* and, to a lesser extent, *transmutatio*. *Adjectio* and also *transmutatio* and *immutatio*, in that they are mainly comprised of, and realised through, *adjectio*, result inevitably in the *amplificatio* of the model and contribute to its *ornatus* (embellishment).[178] The accumulation of adjectives and phrases and the extensive use of metaphors, which have the effect of amplifying the text, are congenial to Nonnus' "baroque" penchant for overwhelming abundance. Within the various procedures employed by the poet in his amplification of the Johannine diction, the variety of metaphorical expressions[179] is particularly remarkable. The amplifying (αὔξησις) or diminishing (ταπείνωσις) function of metaphors was already underlined by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, where it is explained that, in order either to embellish or praise, the rhetorician should borrow a metaphor from something better, pertaining to the same genre, whereas, in order to denigrate or blame, the metaphor should be borrowed from something worse.[180] The latter statement refers to epideictic rhetoric, which in the Aristotelian scheme of things is mostly identified with the encomium, and among the three branches of oratory epideictic

177 These are the four techniques that Theon sees as forming the paraphrase (15 Patillon-Bolognesi, pp. 107–108, surving in Armenian translation). Quintilian at 1.5,6 and 1.5,38 mentions *adjectio*, *detractio*, *immutatio*, *transmutatio* as categories of solecisms, mistakes in written speech. For Phoebammon (probably A.D. V–VI), who refers to figures, both of word and of thought, δέον εἰδέναι ὅτι πάντα τὰ σχήματα κατὰ δ' γίνονται τρόπους, ἤτοι αἰτίας, κατὰ ἔνδειαν, κατὰ πλεονασμόν, κατὰ μετάθεσιν, κατὰ ἐναλλαγήν (3.1.1,69–72 Spengel). See further below, *The Rhetorical Background to the Paraphrase in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Treatises, B. Ancient Rhetorical Treatises and Paraphrastic Technique, 1. Main Authors, a) Aelius Theon, iii. Paraphrase*, end of section. Cf. also Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 69 and Johnson (2016), p. 271.

178 Volpe Cacciatore (2006, esp. p. 113) sees Nonnus' elaboration of the original as realised through *ornatus in verbis singulis* (*emphasis*, *litotes*, *hyperbole*) and *ornatus in verbis conjunctis*.

179 Aristotle offers a definition of the metaphor in *Po.* 1457b, where the figure is described as the application of an alien name by transfer either from genus to species or from species to genus or from species to species or by analogy. In the same treatise Aristotle also asserts that in the process of making poetry it is essential to master the art of creating metaphors, which is a sort of innate skill: *Po.* 1459a. For the definition of the metaphor as an abridged comparison, as it appears in Quintilian (*Inst. Or.* 8.6,8: *brevior est similitudo*), see Lausberg (1998), § 558, pp. 250–252. On the term μεταφορά, see Anderson (2000), pp. 73–77. On the history of the metaphor from the point of view of structural linguistics, see G. Pasini, "Lo studio delle metafore", *Lingua e Stile* 3 (1968), pp. 71–89. On the distinction between comparison and metaphor, see id., "Dalla comparazione alla metafora", *Lingua e Stile* 7 (1972), pp. 441–469.

180 *Rhet.* 3.2 (1405a). See Calboli Montefusco (2004), p. 70.

rhetoric is the one with the closest connection with poetry. In the time of Nonnus, the authority on epideictic was Menander.[181] The influence of the Menandrian treatises is particularly evident in the *Dionysiaca*, especially if we accept the theory that the poem has a macro-structure and that it follows the sequence of the elements which comprise the royal encomium, the βασιλικὸς λόγος.[182] Moreover, as has been argued,[183] *ekphraseis* in the descriptions of towns are clearly indebted to the Menandrian scheme of the praise of cities.[184]

In the *Dionysiaca* and in the *Paraphrase*, the rhetorical background is certainly the same. However, the *Paraphrase* is a metatext, in which the structure of the model does not allow the insertion of ample narrative structures. As a consequence, the influence exerted by Nonnus' rhetorical training on the *Paraphrase* is to be detected in shorter segments. In general, the approach of the paraphrast is extremely respectful towards the Gospel text in terms of content and sequence of events. When the poet decides to repeat the *Vorlage* in a literal way, it is either because the Johannine diction contains Biblical quotations or because such literal repetition is particularly effective. Omissions are extremely rare as well. Occasionally, Nonnus may resort to condensing or abbreviating certain Gospel passages, and this typically happens when repetitions occur in the Johannine text. The usual procedure, the expansion of the *Vorlage*, is achieved on lexical and theological levels, so that, eventually, it is typically intertwined with religious exegesis. The rich variety of metaphorical images and rhetorical devices, such as *anaphora*, *hypallage*, alliteration, oxymoron, and *periphrasis*, for example, far from being mere embellishments, usually have an exegetical function as well and are employed in order to elucidate the Gospel text. Thus, the rhetorical practice becomes an instrument, rather than a goal, for the interpreter of the Johannine text.

The tradition of interpreting the Bible for both listeners and readers was well-established in the Christian community, especially so because of the appearance of heresies which made dogmatic clarifications necessary, as has

181 Russell-Wilson (1981), p. xxxvi.

182 Mentioned above, in *C. The Dionysiaca*. See also Miguélez Cavero (2009), p. 252; D'Ippolito (2016), p. 374, n. 12. Another theory is that Nonnus intended the *Dionysiaca* to be an encomiastic hymn dedicated to the "τρίγονος god": Zagreus, Dionysus, Iacchus. See D'Ippolito (2016), p. 374, n. 12.

183 Lauritzen (2012), p. 182, with regard to the cities of Nicaea, Tyre and Berytus. See also Agosti's observations on the description of city of the Indians: Agosti (2014a), pp. 150–155.

184 The rules of the description of cities are outlined by Menander Rhetor, 1.346–347–351= Russell-Wilson (1981), pp. 32–42.

been repeatedly demonstrated.[185] Cyril, for instance, on whom Nonnus principally draws, stresses the need for heresy to be combatted in the introduction of his commentary on John.[186] As regards the Latin Bible epics, it has been argued that their debt to Christian exegesis is greater than their debt to classical education. The opposite has again been suggested, and a composite view has also been proposed, according to which there is a balance between Christianity and Antiquity in Bible epic.[187] Readings which see primarily Christianity or primarily pagan methods of paraphrase in the Bible epic in fact recognise a more or less distinctive line between engagement in Christian interpretation, on the one hand, and, on the other, adherence on the author's part to classical rhetorical models. Like his Latin counterparts, Nonnus, too, is primarily a poet-exegete and secondarily a poet-rhetorician who (simply) applies the ancient rhetorical principles of rewording (through amplification and the various techniques associated with it) to improve a given text, in this case a scriptural text. Yet—to follow a line of thought similar to that behind the composite approach we have just mentioned—the cultural distance between ancient rhetorical tradition and religious exegesis itself is not necessarily that great.

First of all, paraphrase itself can be actually an act of exegesis. This is especially true for the literary paraphrase, whether religious or not. Commentators on Aristotle elucidated his ideas, producing a kind of *philosophical* paraphrase, and other ancient paraphrasts, such as Eutecnius, also produced paraphrases which clarified the meaning of the original.[188] Thus, the paraphrast is *a priori*

185 See, for instance, Young (1997), pp. 17–45, where the author discusses, *inter alia*, the approach by Origen, in his commentary, to the Gospel of John and also Athanasius' hermeneutical work. For the anti-heretical standpoint of the Latin Bible epic poets, see above, with n. 115.

186 See 1.3–5 Pusey.

187 See the review of the theories of Herzog, who, underestimating to a certain extent the classical influence, stresses the Christian didacticism in the Latin epics (Herzog [1975], pp. 60–68, 109–123 and *passim*), and Roberts (1985), who overemphasises the rhetorical aspect of these poems, by Malsbary (1985), pp. 57–60, Nodes (1993), pp. 2–4, 18, and Nazzaro (2001), pp. 124–127. For a review of Herzog's approach, see also Deproost (1997), pp. 22–24. Nodes exemplifies the synthetic view with Witke (1971), who argues that Latin Bible epic is the product of the tendency of Late Antiquity to assimilate "Christian themes into the classical Roman tradition" and to present "scriptural narrative in the classical idiom" (Nodes 1993, p. 3). See further Witke (1971), *passim*, esp. pp. 145–232.

188 See Zucker (2011, § 2.5), who mentions, *inter alia*, the statements of Sophonias (A.D. XIII–XIV) in his paraphrase of Aristotle's *De anima*, in which the author refers to the exegetical quality of the paraphrase (1.1–25, 2.35–38), and the opening lines of the paraphrase of [Oppian's] *Cynegetica* by Eutecnius, who refers to the "obscurity" of the original, implying

engaged in the interpretation of his *Vorlage*, in pagan tradition, too. Secondly, it has been shown that Christian exegesis itself draws, at least partly, on ancient methods of interpretation, especially interpretation associated with the school practice or purely philological. In particular, Origen's commentaries on the Gospels have been examined in the light of methods of philological exegesis, such as διόρθωσις and ἀνάγνωσις (textual criticism), γλωσσηματικόν (explanation of words), τεχνικόν (grammatical and rhetorical clarifications), ἱστορικόν (explanation of facts, or, more specifically, "the enquiry that produces as much information as possible with respect to the elements, actions, characters or background of the text"), matters of metre (μετρικόν) and style, identification of the πρόσωπον, i.e the speaker of the passage in question. These categories are in fact adjusted, by modern critics, from the description of the γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax and from the clarifications of this description by his commentator.[189] If we transfer these principles from their use in prose commentaries to the freer and more complex poetic creation, we can see that in the *Paraphrase* especially the explanation of words and the various aspects of the ἱστορικόν, which can be rendered with the general term *realia*, are constantly in the poet's mind and are intermingled with his purely religious interpretative comments. This "*realia*" aspect can be in fact traced in every kind of amplification in which Christian exegesis is also present. With reference to the investigation of the present study, it appears in the poet's explanations (being thus interwoven with the γλωσσηματικόν), in his sketching of character[190] and even in

that his work elucidates its meaning: 8.2–5 Tüselmann (O. Tüselmann, *Die Paraphrase des Euteknios zu Oppians Kynegetika* [Berlin 1900]: 8–43) τὰς Ὀππιανοῦ τῆς κυνηγίας βίβλους / ἐκ τῆς σκοτεινῆς τοῦ μέτρου δυσφωνίας / εἰς πεζὸν εἶδος τοῦ λόγου μεθαρμόσας / προὔθηκά σοι, κτλ.). Cf. also Roberts (1985, pp. 54–58), who plausibly regards the paraphrases of Eutecnius and Themistius as interpretative paraphrases.

189 See Dion. Thr. *Ars Gr.* 1.1,5–6 *Gr. Gr.*, where Γραμματική is seen as consisting of parts which include explanation of the poetic tropes, words and "stories" and inquiry on etymology, and *Comm. in Dion. Thr. Artem gramm.* 1.3,164,9–11 Gr. Gr., where the parts of the Γραμματική (reading, hermeneutics, corrections and textual criticism) and the means by which these are realised are defined more clearly: μέρη δὲ αὐτῆς (sc. γραμματικῆς) τέσσαρα, ἀναγνωστικόν, ἐξηγητικόν, διορθωτικὸν καὶ κριτικόν· ὄργανα δὲ τέσσαρα, γλωσσηματικόν, ἱστορικόν, τεχνικόν, μετρικόν. See Neuschäfer (1987), pp. 139–140 and the notes on p. 398. For the application of these categories on Origen's commentaries, see Neuschäfer (1987), pp. 139–246. See also the summary of the approach of Neuschäfer in Young (1997), p. 82, n. 18, and the discussion of Origen's commentaries by Young according to the same model (pp. 83–89). For the definition of *Historia* in particular, see Young (1997), p. 87.

190 For instance, the γλωσσόκομον of Judas is explained as a box which contained money, "copper": the phrase τὸ γλωσσόκομον ἔχων of John 12.6 is rendered as εἶχε δὲ κίστην, / τῇ ἔνι χαλκὸς ἔκειτο (*Par.* 12.24–25). For Judas' behaviour, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 3. Judas*.

his elaborations of high theological significance, such as the additions concerning the details of the Crucifixion.[191] For interpretation (which includes religious exegesis), as a literary practice rooted in the Greek tradition of *paideia* in which didacticism was inherent in poetry and Homer was an exemplary "teacher" and an encyclopaedic source, see below, *H. Interpretatio*, introductory note.

Despite the intrinsic restrictions inherent in the paraphrastic genre, where the inventiveness of the poet is undeniably constrained by the existence of a model (and respect for it) and by a specific sequence of points to elaborate on, Nonnus' creativity in reworking his model, that is, in transferring its contents to a different literary genre, finds infinite ways to express itself through the resources of ποικιλία, even in this seemingly rigid framework.

G Aims of the Present Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the different paraphrastic techniques employed by Nonnus in his rendition of the Johannine text. Notwithstanding the ample variety of the different stylistic solutions employed by Nonnus in his re-elaboration of the Johannine Gospel and despite the fact that it is impossible to categorise his overwhelming poetic exuberance, it is still possible to distinguish certain criteria of rewriting through analysis of passages of the paraphrased text and comparison with the *Vorlage*.

The 1985 monograph of Roberts, which investigates the paraphrastic techniques of Latin bible epic, offers a valuable method, although it has been criticised for its excessive focus on the debt of the Latin poems to ancient rhetoric.[192] This study classifies a number of paraphrastic procedures, most of which are pertinent to Nonnus' work. A number of principal categories that Roberts uses to examine paraphrasing techniques, such as the insertion of *periphrasis*, literal paraphrasis, the transpositions, the synonymic expansion, the handling of the speech, the *interpretatio*,[193] we will discuss with regard to Nonnus' work.

Nevertheless, the Nonnian re-elaboration of the Johannine text by no means falls into all the categories singled out by Roberts. For example, literal para-

191 See below, *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, d. Details of the Crucifixion. Jesus and Peter*, especially, but not exclusively, with regard to the number of nails (as the *realia* aspect can comprise many more parameters, apart from the clearly material one).

192 See above, n. 187

193 Different paraphrastic techniques are classified by Roberts (1985), pp. 107–158.

phrasis, omissions and transpositions are extremely rare, conflations and abbreviations seldom occur, and, conversely, the technique of *amplificatio* is so widely employed, that it is not always easy to draw an accurate line between several of its components (such as the accumulation of phrases or the handling of the speech) and the aspect of *interpretatio*. The difficulty of dissecting the poetic text into rigid compartments arises mainly from the nature of Nonnus' poem, which involves numerous references, ramifications and allusions to different traditions, ranging over centuries of pagan literature and Christian theology.

Our examination of the techniques which Nonnus employs to compose his paraphrase also includes discussions of Nonnian insertions that significantly enrich the text, in contrast to Roberts' approach. Roberts mostly employs rhetorical categorisation of the poets' paraphrastic modes. We discuss many rhetorical figures, while also examining other techniques. These include *ethopoea*, which rests on a basis of rhetoric, but still allows a rich and free development of its material. We also look at character sketching, whether realised through speech or through some other means, the heightening of the dramatic atmosphere and the use of imagery and striking description. In all of our discussions, we look at the exegetical background and at intertextual references to other poetry, where such references seem probable and significant. Thus our schema does in essence retain Roberts' categorisation, albeit greatly expanding upon it, and rests on ancient rhetorical theory. It does enrich this categorisation and demonstrates how far exegesis is present in many other constituents of the *amplificatio*–αὔξησις, in addition to dealing with pure *interpretatio*, which concerns passages in which the exegetical element is prevalent: our analysis of the explanations, the imagery, the character sketching and the sub-chapters in which these discussions consist also sheds light on the poet's use of exegetical material and his consequent clarification of various theological notions, *inter alia*. As Nodes concludes for the Latin Bible epics,[194] for Nonnus, too, doctrine is one of his poem's dimensions. It is not the only one, but it is still highly important.

A systematic presentation of parallels in diction, motifs, images, details in the sketching of character and other techniques between the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* is beyond the scope of this study. However, we make reference to the pagan epic when comparisons are significant as far as Nonnus' aesthetic choices and wider poetic universe are concerned.

194 Nodes (1993), pp. 129–130.

Our approach does not lie in attempting to categorise Nonnus' paraphrastic strategies within rigid compartments. The aim of the following chapters is rather to offer a representative selection of examples that illustrate Nonnus' various techniques of rephrasing the *Vorlage*, in an attempt to understand better the approach of the paraphrast vis-à-vis his model, while bearing in mind that we are more likely to identify certain directional principles, so to speak, rather than to discern strict guidelines.

After the Introduction, followed by a chapter which summarises the ancient theoretical discussions on and around paraphrase, we group Nonnus' modes of paraphrasing in the two main categories used in this study, that is *Non-amplificatory paraphrase* and *Amplification*. The first category examines Nonnian passages in which the original text is only minimally altered: these "non-amplificatory" techniques, which are the exception rather than the rule in Nonnus' re-elaboration, involve literal paraphrase, abbreviations and conflations and transpositions. In the latter category, the *Amplificatio*, we investigate the various forms of the typical techniques of expansion of the model. Amplification encompasses numerous individual techniques here. The examination begins with the less drastic modes, such as *periphrasis* and synonymic *amplificatio*, realised through additions of adjectives, participles and the figure of *anaphora*. The following section deals with Nonnus' linguistic explanations, a practice closely related to the use of exegesis, as the poet explains the terms both against the background of Biblical and other Christian literature but also in the light of his encyclopaedic knowledge. In this sub-chapter, then, we look for the first time at a condensed and concise form of interpretation. Next, we examine more extended and impressive instances of expansion of the Gospel. In the sections that follow, we discuss cases of Nonnus' elaboration of imagery through which theological notions are conveyed and of passages that display theatricality, through memorable visualisation of the scenes, description of landscapes and other settings and the effects of sound. In these instances of extended amplification, theological exegesis is always implied to a greater or a lesser extent, and our analysis constantly tries to take account of this crucial point. Furthermore, the rhetorical principle of *enargeia* is frequently exploited here. We then move on to examine the Nonnian techniques employed in his presentation of persons and their speech. This is an aspect of amplification related, in a sense, to the "theatrical" quality of the work, which is, however, much more focused on the characters' psychology and intellect. The relevant sections investigate the handling of the direct and indirect speech and the sketching of character. Nonnus' substantial re-elaboration as regards insertions in the Johannine persons' words, comments surrounding these words and descriptions of the persons'

appearance, gestures and movements are discussed in the sub-chapters on the handling of speech and in the character sketching sections. Here we look in further detail at the poet's use of the principles of *ethopoea*[195] and his blending of religious exegesis with it. Yet, it is chiefly in the final section, which deals with religious *interpretatio per se*, that we investigate a number of crucial theological issues and their handling by the poet on the basis of selected representative and significant passages. It is there that Nonnus' theology is placed in the context of his contemporary Christian milieu. Trinitarian theology obviously occupies an important part of this study.

The translation of the Old and New Testament passages used in this book is taken from the *English Standard Version* (2001). The translation of Nonnus' *Praphrase* is by Hadjittofi (forthcoming), the translation of the *Progymnasmata* is by Kennedy (2003) and of Ps. Hermogenes by Kennedy (2005), the translation of John Chrysostom's *Homilies on John* is by Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin (1957–1959) and the translation of Cyril's *Commentary on John* is by Maxwell and Elowsky (2013–2015). See Bibliography.

195 See the preliminary discussion of *ethopoea* above, in *F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

CHAPTER II

The Rhetorical Background to the Paraphrase in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Treatises

A Poetry and Rhetoric

Along with the rediscovery of Biblical paraphrase, studies have focused on the nature and characteristics of late antique schools and teaching, which regarded rhetoric above all as the foundation of culture and personality. Papyri and the more elaborated *progymnasmata* (e.g. by Libanius)[1] provide us with abundant evidence on school exercises. *Ethopoea* is a *progymnasma* which has attracted particular scholarly interest, especially more recently.[2] Obviously, Nonnus' poem cannot be connected directly with school practice. The poetic and theological value of Biblical epic, especially the Latin Biblical epic, has been repeatedly demonstrated. Nevertheless, the powerful presence of rhetoric is very evident in fifth and sixth century verse production. The descriptions (ἐκφράσεις) of St. Sophia by Paulus Silentiarius and of the cosmic picture by John of Gaza are just two representative examples of the genre of *ekphrasis*. Miguélez Cavero (2008) offers a survey of poetic activity in late antique Egypt. It is worth taking a closer look at rhetorical treatises on paraphrase.

B Ancient Rhetorical Treatises and Paraphrastic Technique

There is unfortunately very little information on the theory that informed the genre of paraphrase. Even the terminology is uncertain, since the words παράφρασις and μετάφρασις are never clearly defined.[3] Nevertheless, paraphrase was

1 The profession of the Grammarian is discussed in detail in Kaster (1988). For the *progymnasmata*, see, for instance, Kennedy (1983), pp. 54–73, Cribiore (2007), pp. 53–54. It is interesting that the study of pagan culture was considered as the first stage of the "gymnastics of the soul" by St. Basil; see further Kaster (1988), pp. 77–78. On the one hundred and forty four *progymnasmata* ascribed to Libanius, see Hock and O'Neil (2002), pp. 125–126, where the problem of attribution of such literature is also discussed. For Libanius' *progymnasmata*, see also Gibson (2008), esp. pp. xxii–xxv, and id. (2014), pp. 131–143.

2 Cf. Amato and Schamp (2005); Amato and Ventrella (2009), pp. 19–29.

3 Pignani (1975) and ead. (1982) observed that the term παράφρασις is not properly used in modern languages.

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a well-defined part of a youth's rhetorical education, appreciated as a useful exercise both for the development of logical skills and the understanding of ideas.[4]

The paraphrastic genre itself was practiced at different levels, from primary school exercises to highly elaborate works: Roberts (1985, p. 39) has classified the different types of paraphrase. Grammatical paraphrase, taught in schools and without literary aims, is distinct from rhetorical paraphrase.[5] Rhetorical paraphrase includes the school exercise of presenting a passage by different *modi* and emulating the model and literary paraphrase involves the exegesis of technical texts and independent artistic creations. The last category includes Biblical epic.

Four Greek treatises of the Roman period deal with rhetorical preliminary exercises (*Progymnasmata*): Aelius Theon (late first century),[6] Ps. Hermogenes[7] (third or fourth century), Aphthonius (fourth century) and Nicolaus Rhetor (fifth century). Some affinities can be found in Theon and Quintilian, who describe the features of the paraphrase and the advancements it allows, while in Ps.-Hermogenes, Aphthonius and some Byzantine commentaries, paraphrase is placed within the structures of the χρεία and the γνώμη.

B.1 *Main Authors*

B.1.a Aelius Theon

Theon's *Progymnasmata* is a rhetorical handbook which deals with paraphrase, as one of the "exercices d'accompagnement", along with reading and listening, which students can practice from the early stages of their education onwards. Reading and listening provide students with examples from writers of the past and refine their literary taste. Paraphrase teaches one how to express ideas in different forms, thus improving both style and understanding of meaning at the same time. These three practices have in common the idea of μίμη-

4 See, for instance, Zucker (2011), §§1.2, 1.3, Whitby (2016), p. 217, Johnson (2016), p. 271.

5 From another point of view, a classification of the *progymnasmata* according to their use ("deliberative oratory" [μῦθος, διήγημα, χρεία, γνώμη, θέσις, νόμος], "juridicial oratory" [ἀνασκευή, κατασκευή and κοινὸς τόπος], "epideictic oratory" [ἔκφρασις, ἠθοποιία, ἐγκώμιον, ψόγος, σύγκρισις]) is made by Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 265.

6 According to the traditional view; fifth century, according to Heath (2002/2003), pp. 155–158.

7 For a brief discussion of the problem concerning the doubtful attribution of these *Progymnasmata* (to Hermogenes of Tarsus [A.D. 161–180], to the fourth-century sophist Libanius), see Kennedy (2003), p. 73.

σις and each one plays an essential role in rhetorical creation as a whole. This means that such practices are not limited to specific literary genres[8] and so we will look at paraphrase at the same time as we look at the other two genres.

B.1.a.i *Reading* (*ἀνάγνωσις*)

p. 4 Patillon. According to Apollonius' statement,[9] reading is τροφὴ λέξεως, that Theon (1, p. 4 [61.31–33]) comments as follows: *τυπούμενοι γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπὸ καλῶν παραδειγμάτων κάλλιστα καὶ μιμησόμεθα*. In other words, the relationship with the models depends on the nourishment, as it were, that we can take from them, and from the level of imitation.

B.1.a.ii *Listening* (*ἀκρόασις*)

p. 4 Patillon. Listening is useful because it allows one to derive profit from the work of others (1, p. 4 [61.32–62.1]): τὴν δὲ ἀκρόασιν τίς οὐκ ἂν ἀσμενίσειε, τὰ μετὰ πόνων τοῖς ἄλλοις εἰργασμένα ἑτοίμως λαμβάνων;[10] It is, however, no use without the support of daily exercise. Theon introduces a comparison with painting, in accord with the habit of comparing different types of arts that is usual in school literary production (1. p. 4 [62.1–10]), in particular 4–10: οὕτω *καὶ* τοῖς ῥητορεύειν μέλλουσιν οὔτε τῶν πρεσβυτέρων οἱ λόγοι, οὔτε τῶν διανοημάτων τὸ πλῆθος, οὔτε τὸ περὶ τὴν λέξιν καθαρόν, οὔτε σύνθεσις ἡρμοσμένη, οὔτε ἀκρόασις ἀστεία, οὔτε ὅλως τῶν ἐν ῥητορικῇ καλῶν οὐδὲν χρήσιμον, ἐὰν μὴ καὶ αὐτὸς ἕκαστος ταῖς καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν γραφαῖς ἐγγυμνάζηται.[11] All rhetorical virtues, both of style and content, are insufficient, if they are not practiced continuously: this recalls the importance of φιλοπονία, one of the most important qualities of the distinguished rhetor and scholar.[12]

8 On the use of paraphrase in literary production according to Theon, see Pignani (1975), p. 223: "Teone dunque considera la parafrasi non un determinato tipo di composizione letteraria, ma una particolare tecnica della mimesi, e come tale largamente presente in tutte le opere letterarie".

9 Probably not Apollonius Rhodius, as Theon says, but rather the rhetorician Apollonius Molon, a fellow-student of Cicero. See Kennedy (2003), p. 5, n. 17.

10 *And who would not take pleasure in akroasis* (*hearing a work read aloud*), *readily taking in what has been created by the toil of others?* (tr. Kennedy 2003, p. 6).

11 *So neither the words of older writers nor the multitude of their thoughts nor their purity of language nor harmonious composition nor urbanity of sound nor, in a word, any of the beauties in rhetoric, are useful to those who are going to engage in rhetoric unless each student exercises himself every day in writing* (tr. Kennedy 2003, p. 6).

12 See Greco (2010), on *Or. fun. in Procopium* 17 (pp. 163–164).

B.1.a.iii *Paraphrase* (*παράφρασις*)

1, pp. 4–7 Patillon. The third exercise implies the practice of the preceding two exercises: the model should be elaborated through use of the skills acquired through reading and listening. Theon starts from the debate on the utility of the paraphrase, against those who believe that it is useless to repeat twice what has already been said. They are wrong because (62.13–21) τῆς γὰρ διανοίας ὑφ' ἑνὶ πράγματι μὴ καθ' ἕνα τρόπον κινουμένης, ὥστε τὴν προσπεσοῦσαν αὐτῇ φαντασίαν ὁμοίως προενέγκασθαι, ἀλλὰ κατὰ πλείους, καὶ ποτὲ μὲν ἀποφαινομένων ἡμῶν, ποτὲ δὲ ἐρωτώντων, ποτὲ δὲ πυνθανομένων, ποτὲ δὲ εὐχομένων, ποτὲ δὲ κατ' ἄλλον τινὰ τρόπον τὸ νοηθὲν ἐκφερόντων, οὐδὲν κωλύει κατὰ πάντας τοὺς τρόπους τὸ φαντασθὲν ἐπίσης καλῶς ἐξενεγκεῖν.[13] The same idea can be expressed in different ways, and this implies a high level of abstraction, as Patillon remarks (cf. comm. ad loc). So, according to Theon, formal variety overcomes content, as the former helps one to understand the latter in its fullest sense: thought (διάνοια) is not expressed in only one way (καθ' ἕνα τρόπον), so that the resulting representation (φαντασία) is unique.[14] Consequently, the τρόποι to express what is represented (τὸ φαντασθέν) are many (πλείους). The outcome has to be a beautiful piece of rhetoric (καλῶς ἐξενεγκεῖν).

The examples Theon quotes are drawn from poetry and prose. In both cases, the paraphrased text is Homer, authoritative and well-known, namely *Od.* 18.136–137 (elaborated by Archilochus [fr. 131 West, 1989]) and *Il.* 9.593–594 (elaborated by Dem. 19.65, Aeschines *Ctes.* 157, Thuc. 2.45), and other authors, Attic historians and orators. These demonstrate the initial statement: not only is the paraphrase useful to orators, but also to poets and historians (62.21–23): μαρτύρια δὲ τούτου καὶ παρὰ ποιηταῖς ἢ ἑτέροις τισὶν καὶ παρὰ ῥήτορσι, καὶ ἱστορικοῖς, καὶ ἁπλῶς πάντες οἱ παλαιοὶ φαίνονται τῇ παραφράσει ἄριστα κεχρημένοι, οὐ μόνον τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἀλλήλων μεταπλάσσοντες.[15]

In a text surviving only in its Armenian translation, Theon outlines the four main modes by means of which paraphrase is achieved (15 Patillon-Bolognesi,

13 *Thought is not moved by any one thing in only one way so as to express the idea* (*phantasia*) *that has occurred to it in a similar form, but it is stirred in a number of different ways, and sometimes we are making a declaration, sometimes asking a question, sometimes making an inquiry, sometimes beseeching, and sometimes expressing our thought in some other way. There is nothing to prevent what is imagined from being expressed equally well in all these ways* (tr. Kennedy 2003, p. 6).

14 For the φαντασία of the orator, see, for instance, Goldhill (2007), p. 4.

15 *There is evidence of this in paraphrase by a poet of his own thoughts elsewhere or paraphrase by another poet and in the orators and historians, and, in brief, all ancient writers seem to have used paraphrase in the best possible way, rephrasing not only their own writings but those of each other* (tr. Kennedy 2003, p. 6).

pp. 107–108): syntax, addition, subtraction, substitution.[16] These four techniques are categories of *change*, referring to grammatical or syntactical figures, and first appear in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.21,5–7) where they describe the ways in which paronomasia is realised (*addendis litteris*, *demendis litteris*, *transferendis litteris*, *commutandis litteris*).[17] Quintilian at 1.5,6 and 1.5,38 sees *adjectio*, *detractio*, *immutatio*, *transmutatio* as instances of mistakes in written speech. But Quintilian also sees *mutatio*, *adjectio*, *detractio*, *ordo* (9.3,27–28) as rhetorical figures that attract the audience's attention. Referring to figures, both of speech and of thought, Phoebammon (probably A.D. V–VI) says: δέον εἰδέναι ὅτι πάντα τὰ σχήματα κατὰ δ′ γίνονται τρόπους, ἤτοι αἰτίας, κατὰ ἔνδειαν, κατὰ πλεονασμόν, κατὰ μετάθεσιν, κατὰ ἐναλλαγήν (3.1.1,69–72 Spengel).[18] It has been suggested that the four figures "may have been originated from grammarians who discussed figures of speech and have been extended by Phoebammon to the figures of thought"[19] or that they are derived from philosophical views on language.[20] Thus Theon's *syntax* is easily understood as the equivalent to Quintilian's *transmutatio* and Phoebammon's μετάθεσις.

B.1.b Quintilian

Theon's line of thought is linked with that of Quintilian in his statement on paraphrase:[21] whatever the relation between the two may be, and whatever the paths followed by their thematic connections, they both represent the point of view of a school of thought that appreciates paraphrase both as a means of training and as a literary product. This attitude is opposed to the position

16 *La paraphrase compte quatre modes principaux: selon la syntaxe, selon l'addition, selon la soustraction et selon la substitution; à partir de ces modes on pourra avoir un très grand nombre de modes mixtes.*

17 See Desbordes (1983), p. 24.

18 See further Desbordes (1983; pp. 26–27 for Phoebammon), Lausberg (1998), § 462, Zucker (2011), § 1.3.

19 See Kennedy (1983), p. 124.

20 Namely, Platonic *Cratylus* (394b), where it is noted that the person who knows about names and understands their meaning is not confused by the addition, subtraction or transposition of a letter (καὶ ὁ ἐπιστάμενος περὶ ὀνομάτων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῶν σκοπεῖ, καὶ οὐκ ἐκπλήττεται εἴ τι πρόσκειται γράμμα ἢ μετάκειται ἢ ἀφῄρηται). See the discussion of Desbordes (1983), pp. 28–29.

21 On the relationship between Theon and Quintilian, see Reichel (1909), pp. 115–127, and I. Lana, *Quintiliano, il "Sublime" e gli "Esercizi preparatori" di Elio Teone. Ricerca sulle fonti greche di Quintiliano e sull'autore "Del sublime"* (Turin 1951), pp. 113–151, who underlines the close similarities between the two texts and concludes that Quintilian used Theon. Heath (2002/2003, esp. pp. 155–158), disagreeing with the traditional view, dates Theon to the fifth century A.D.

expressed, e.g., by Cic. *De orat.* 1.34,154, who regards paraphrase as useless. The flourishing examples of rhetorical paraphrase over the centuries that followed show that Theon's and Quintilian's position was prevalent in both east and west.

Quintilian discusses the benefit that rephrasing of a text offers at 10.5,5–11. The context in which Quintilian's theory appears is the issue of translation from Greek into Latin and *vice versa*, and modern treatises are based on his theory.[22]

B.2 *Main Issues*

The passages mentioned here from Theon and Quintilian raise the following issues regarding the practice of paraphrase:

a) Paraphrase as an imitation of the models and as a better way of acquiring knowledge. Theon expresses this idea in the chapter on reading and listening and offers a comparison between rhetoric and figural arts.[23] In 10.5,4–5, Quintilian states that paraphrase, rather than being merely a matter of interpretation, also involves competition with the model.[24] It is always possible to improve.[25] It is also useful, as Theon also notes, to learn from the best authors. Quintilian states that the act of paraphrasing is not just a means of reformulating ideas, but a competition with the best ancient authors. This implies a relationship with the past which involves selection, imitation and emulation of literary models.

b) The paraphrase is useful, as it allows one to express ideas in many different ways, thanks to the unlimited resources offered by eloquence. This is a celebration of ποικιλία, which represents the content in a variety of beautiful forms: see Theon, 1, p. 4 Patillon (62.13–16). Similarly, Quintilian insists on the abund-

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22 Pignani (1975, p. 225), observes that the use of Quintilian contributed to the confusion in terminology. She also quotes *Inst. Or.* 1.9,2, referring to Aesopic fables, and she remarks that Quintilian distinguishes the changes in language and metre from paraphrase. On this passage, see also Roberts (1985), p. 15: "it is evident that Quintilian has in mind prose paraphrases of poetry".

23 This comparison between visual arts and rhetoric is frequent in encomiastic literature, as the rhetor aims to paint a moral portrait of the person he celebrates. See Greco (2011).

24 *Neque ego paraphrasin esse interpretationem tantum volo, sed circa eosdem sensus certamen atque aemulationem* (*but I would not have paraphrase restrict itself to the bare interpretation of the original: its duty is rather to rival and vie with the original in the expression of the same thoughts*; tr. Butler 1922).

25 10.5,6 *nam neque semper est desperandum, aliquid illis, quae dicta sunt, melius posse reperiri* (*for it is always possible that we may discover expressions which are an improvement on those which have already been used*; tr. Butler 1922).

ance of stylistic means.[26] He compares rhetoric with the activity of actors,[27] who employ a wide variety of gestures (10.5,6), and describes paraphrase as an improvement consisting in the expansion of what is small and as a practice of adding material to what is originally limited and of producing a charming result: 10.5,11 *illud virtutis indicium est, fundere quae natura contracta sunt, augere parva, varietatem similibus, voluptatem expositis dare et bene dicere multa de paucis*.[28]

According to Quintilian, paraphrase is a matter of style. This is also Theon's point of view. It is notable that Theon's vocabulary has philosophical connotations,[29] and also for Quintilian philosophical background is one of the necessary features of the orator (*Inst. Or.* 1.10,9–11). Work on style (λέξις) is the specific aim of paraphrase: referring to philosophical texts, Pignani (1982, pp. 21–24) notes the opposition between paraphrase, which freely elaborates the exact νοῦς of the model, keeping the σαφήνεια and having literary aspirations, and the aim of the exegesis, which is only to explain the meaning of each statement, in the Aristotelian paraphrases by Themistius (*Analytica posteriora*) and Sophonias (*De anima*). The work on λέξις in its deep sense is also the technique that Nonnus uses to reveal the hidden sense of the Fourth Gospel, employing both previous interpretations and his own.

c) The comparison of the various possible τρόποι ("modes") demonstrates that ποικιλία ("variety") is the basic requirement in this kind of literature: see Theon 1, pp. 4–5 Patillon (62.13–21) τῆς γὰρ διανοίας ὑφ' ἑνὶ πράγματι μὴ καθ' ἕνα τρόπον κινουμένης, ὥστε τὴν προσπεσοῦσαν αὐτῇ φαντασίαν ὁμοίως προενέγκασθαι, ἀλλὰ κατὰ πλείους, κτλ.[30]

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26 *Inst. Or.* 10.5,5 *neque adeo ieiunam ac pauperem natura eloquentiam fecit ut una de re bene dici nisi semel non possit* (*and nature did not make eloquence such a poor and starveling thing, that there should be only one adequate expression for any one theme*; tr. Butler 1922).

27 The comparison with different skills, figural arts and theatre, in particular, is typical in rhetoric, precisely in the same context as in Quintilian. As other artists make contributions to art by means of their skills, it is not appropriate that the rhetor gives up the ability that he has (for instance, Choricius, *Laud. Marc.* 1.2,15). For the metaphorical use of terms from theatre, see Matino (2006).

28 *True merit is revealed by the power to expand what is naturally compressed, to amplify what is small, to lend variety to sameness, charm to the commonplace, and to say a quantity of good things about a very limited number of subjects* (tr. Butler 1922).

29 For the Stoic influences, see Reichel (1909), pp. 23–29, and Patillon-Bolognesi (1997), p. 125.

30 For the text, see above, *Aelius Theon, 3 Paraphrase*.

This statement is closely parallel to Quint. 10.5,7–8, where the author holds that the paraphrase is best achieved through different means in different instances: sometimes with brevity, sometimes with verbal abundance, sometimes with literal expression, sometimes with metaphor, sometimes with directness and sometimes with the use of figures of speech.[31]

C Paraphrase as a School Exercise. The *Chreia*

The technique of expressing the same idea in different ways is appropriate to school education and school exercises prepared students for forensic and administrative careers. Here our witnesses are Ps. Hermogenes and Aphthonius, who describe paraphrase as a part of the *chreia*, that is, an exercise following a fixed schema and with a moral and intellectual content.[32] It was practiced at all three stages of education, including the tertiary, which dealt with rhetoric.[33] These treatises differ from that of Theon, both in theory and structure.[34] They are divided into fourteen chapters, and the *chreia* is the third, followed by the *gnome*. These short sections are closely related to school activity and consequently of little use in a discussion on rhetorical paraphrase. It might, however, be worth quoting them here, both for the sake of completeness and also because they describe what kind of intellectual effort this part of the speech required:

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31 Quint. 10.5,8 *sua brevitati gratia, sua copiae, alia tralatis virtus, alia propriis, hoc oratio recta, illud figura declinata commendat. Ipsa denique utilissima est exercitationi difficultas. Quid quod auctores maximi sic diligentius cognoscuntur? Non enim scripta lectione secura transcurrimus, sed tractamus singula et necessario introspicimus et quantum virtutis habeant vel hoc ipso cognoscimus, quod imitari non possums.* (*brevity and copiousness each have their own peculiar grace, the merits of metaphor are one thing and of literalness another, and while direct expression is most effective in one case, in another the best result is gained by a use of figures. Further, the exercise is valuable in virtue of its difficulty; and again, there is no better way of acquiring a thorough understanding of the greatest authors. For, instead of hurriedly running a careless eye over their writings, we handle each separate phrase and are forced to give it close examination, and we come to realise the greatness of their excellence from the very fact that we cannot imitate them*; tr. Butler 1922).

32 See Patillon (2008), pp. 69–74: “Il n’est pas exagéré de dire que l’exercice de la chrie plonge l’élève dans le bain de la vie morale, tant par l’accès à un discours de l’homme sur l’homme et sur la vie, que par l’initiation au débat pragmatique” (p. 74).

33 The subject is presented in Hock and O’Neil (2002), pp. 1–77, with papyrological examples of school exercises at primary and secondary stages.

34 The differences between Theon on one hand and Aphthonius and Hermogenes on the other are underlined by Patillon (2008), pp. 52–53.

C.1 *Aphthonius,* Progymnasmata[35]

III. ΟΡΟΣ ΧΡΕΙΑΣ (pp. 114–115 Patillon)

1. Χρεία ἐστὶν ἀπομνημόνευμα σύντομον εὐστόχως ἐπί τι πρόσωπον ἀναφέρουσα. Χρειώδης δὲ οὖσα προσαγορεύεται χρεία (*Chreia is a brief recollection, referring to some person in a pointed way. It is called chreia because it is useful*).
2. Καὶ τῆς χρείας τὸ μέν ἐστι λογικόν, τὸ δὲ πρακτικόν, τὸ δὲ μικτόν. [...] (*Some chreias are verbal, some active, some mixed*).
3. Ἡ μὲν οὖν διαίρεσις αὕτη τῆς χρείας· ἐργάσαιο δὲ αὐτὴν τοῖσδε τοῖς κεφαλαίοις· ἐγκωμιαστικῷ, παραφραστικῷ, τῷ τῆς αἰτίας, ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου, παραβολῇ, παραδείγματι, μαρτυρίᾳ παλαιῶν, ἐπιλόγῳ βραχεῖ (*this is the division of the chreia, and you should elaborate it with the following headings: praise, paraphrase, cause, contrary, comparison, example, testimony of the ancients, brief epilogue*).

IV. ΟΡΟΣ ΓΝΩΜΗΣ (pp. 117–118 Patillon)

1. Γνώμη ἐστὶ λόγος ἐν ἀποφάνσεσι κεφαλαιώδης ἐπί τι προτρέπων ἢ ἀποτρέπων (*maxim is a summary statement, in declarative sentences, urging or dissuading something*).
3. Ἡ μὲν οὖν διαίρεσις αὕτη τῆς γνώμης· ἐργάσαιο δ' αὐτὴν τοῖς τῆς χρείας κεφαλαίοις, ἐγκωμιαστικῷ, παραφραστικῷ, τῷ τῆς αἰτίας, ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου, παραβολῇ, παραδείγματι, μαρτυρίᾳ παλαιῶν, ἐπιλόγῳ βραχεῖ (*this is how the maxim is classified, and you should elaborate it with the headings for the chreia: praise, paraphrase, cause, opposite, comparison, example, testimony of the ancients, short epilogue*).

C.2 *Ps.-Hermogenes,* Progymnasmata[36]

III. ΠΕΡΙ ΧΡΕΙΑΣ (pp. 185–186 Patillon)

1. Χρεία ἐστὶν ἀπομνημόνευμα λόγου τινὸς ἢ πράξεως ἢ συναμφοτέρου σύντομον ἔχον δήλωσιν, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον χρησίμου τινὸς ἕνεκα (*A chreia is a recollection of a saying or action or both, with a pointed meaning, usually for the sake of something useful*).

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35 Translations of Kennedy (2003). For chreia, an "anecdote", and for *gnome* in Aphthonius, see, for instance, Kennedy (1983), pp. 61–62.

36 Translations of Kennedy (2003).

2. Τῶν δὲ χρειῶν αἳ μέν εἰσι λογικαί, αἳ δὲ πρακτικαί, αἳ δὲ μικταί [...] (*Some chreias are verbal, some actional, some are mixed*).

6. Ἀλλὰ νῦν ἐπὶ τὸ συνέχον χωρῶμεν, τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν ἡ ἐργασία. Ἐργασία τοίνυν οὕτως ἔστω. Πρῶτον ἐγκώμιον διὰ βραχέων τοῦ εἰπόντος ἢ πράξαντος, εἶτα αὐτῆς τῆς χρείας παράφρασις, εἶτα ἡ αἰτία. 7. Οἷον· Ἰσοκράτης ἔφησε τῆς παιδείας τὴν μὲν ῥίζαν εἶναι πικρὰν τὸν δὲ καρπὸν γλυκύν. [...] Εἶθ' ἡ χρεία· "εἶπε τόδε", καὶ οὐ θήσεις αὐτὴν ψιλὴν ἀλλὰ πλατύνων τὴν ἑρμηνείαν (*but now let us come to the point, and this is the elaboration. Let the elaboration be as follows: first, a brief encomion of the speaker or doer; then a paraphrase of the chreia; then the cause; for example, "Isocrates said that the root of education is bitter but its fruit is sweet".* [...] *Then the chreia, "He said this," and you will not state it in bare form but expand the statement*).

IV. ΠΕΡΙ ΓΝΩΜΗΣ (pp. 187–188 Patillon)

1. Γνώμης ἐστὶ λόγος κεφαλαιώδης ἐν ἀποφάνσει καθολικῇ ἀποτρέπων τι ἢ προτρέπων ἐπί τι ἢ ὁποῖον ἕκαστόν ἐστι δηλῶν (*maxim is a summary statement, in universal terms, dissuading or exhorting in regard to something, or making clear what a particular thing is*).

8. Ἔστω δὲ ἡ γνώμη ὡς ἐν παραδείγματι "οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὕδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα". Οὐκοῦν ἐπαινέσεις διὰ βραχέων τὸν εἰρηκότα. Εἶτα κατὰ τὸ ἁπλοῦν, τοῦτο δ' ἔστι τὸ παραφράσαι τὴν γνώμην, οἷον "δι' ὅλης νυκτὸς οὐ προσήκει ἄνδρα ἐν βουλαῖς ἐξεταζόμενον καθεύδειν" (*for an example, consider the maxim, "A man who is a counselor should not sleep throughout the night". You will praise the speaker briefly. Then give a simple statement paraphrasing the maxim; for example, "It is not fitting for a man proved in councils to sleep through the whole night"*).

The similarities between Aphthonius and Ps.-Hermogenes are evident and the terminology is almost the same. Cf. the definition of χρεία and its division in "logical", "practical" and "mixed" in both authors.

C.3 *Ps.-Hermogenes*, Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος (On the Method of Forceful Speaking)

Ascribed to Hermogenes, this work belongs to a *corpus* which includes four other writings: the Προγυμνάσματα, Περὶ στάσεων, Περὶ εὑρέσεως, Περὶ ἰδεῶν. Despite the problem of its authorship,[37] this text has received attention, since

37 On the difficulty of ascription and the *corpus*, see Mas Mas (2001), pp. 1–3, who concludes

it is a summary of stylistic rules specifically intended for school.[38] The treatise is composed in thirty-seven chapters. The chapter on paraphrase is the twenty-fourth. It is as follows (24, 440.6–441.14 Rabe):

Περὶ τοῦ λεληθότως τὰ αὐτὰ λέγειν ἢ ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἄλλοις

Τοῦ ταὐτὰ λέγοντα ἢ ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἄλλῳ τινὶ μὴ δοκεῖν τὰ αὐτὰ λέγειν διπλῆ μέθοδος· τάξεως μεταβολή, καὶ μήκη καὶ βραχύτητες. Ἡ δὲ αὐτὴ καὶ τοῦ παραφράζειν μέθοδος· ἢ γὰρ τὴν τάξιν μεταβάλλεις, ᾗπερ ἐκεῖνος ἐχρήσατο, ἢ τὸ μέτρον· εἴπερ γὰρ διὰ μακρῶν ἐκεῖνος, ταῦτα ἐν βραχέσι συνελὼν λέγεις, ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον.

Τίς δὲ ἑκατέρου τούτων ὁ καιρός; Ἡ μὲν συμβουλευτικὴ μήκη καὶ βραχύτητας ἐπιδέχεται· τῆς γὰρ τάξεως μεταβολὴν οὐ δύναται ἔχειν, ὅτι ἐν συμβουλῇ πάντως πρῶτον τὸ κατεπεῖγον εἶναι δεῖ παρὰ παντὶ συμβουλεύοντι. Ἐν δὲ τῇ πανηγυρικῇ νόμος ἐστὶ τῶν κεφαλαίων τῆς τάξεως ἀμετάβλητος ἡ φύσις τῶν πραγμάτων. Χρώμεθα οὖν τοῖς μήκεσι καὶ ταῖς βραχύτησιν, ὥσπερ ἐν συμβουλευτικῇ μὲν ἰδέᾳ ἐποίησεν ὁ Δημοσθένης ἔν τε τοῖς Ὀλυνθιακοῖς καὶ ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῶν ἐν Χερρονήσῳ στρατιωτῶν· τὰ αὐτὰ γὰρ λέγων ἑαυτῷ μάλιστα ἔλαθεν. Ἐν τῷ Ἐπιταφίῳ οὐ μόνον ἔλαθεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄλλα λέγειν ἔδοξε· τὰ γοῦν περὶ τῶν πολέμων Θουκυδίδης μὲν ἐπιμνησθεὶς παρῆκεν, ὁ Πλάτων δὲ ἐπεξειργάσατο· τοὐναντίον δὲ Πλάτων μὲν παρῆκε τὰ περὶ τῆς πολιτείας, Θουκυδίδης δὲ ἐπεξῆλθεν.

Ἐν δὲ τῇ δικανικῇ ἰδέᾳ καὶ ἡ τῆς τάξεως μεταβολὴ χώραν ἔχει, ὥσπερ Δημοσθένης ἐποίησεν ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἀτελείας· Φορμίωνος γὰρ προκατηγορήσαντος τοῦ νόμου καὶ χρησαμένου τοῖς κεφαλαίοις τῆς διαιρέσεως, τῷ δικαίῳ, τῷ συμφέροντι, τῷ καλῷ, τῷ τῆς ἀξίας, ἀνέστρεψε τὴν τάξιν μεταβάλλων· πῶς δὲ τοῦτο ἐποίησεν, ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ λόγου διεξήλθομεν.

On escaping notice while repeating what you or others have said

There are two methods of repeating your own or someone else's words without seeming to do so: change of order, and lengthenings and shortenings. The method is the same as in paraphrasing, for you either change the order the other speaker used or the measure; for if the first ver-

(p. 3) that the work is in fact by an unknown author and can be dated between the end of A.D. II and the beginning of A.D. III. See also Kennedy (2005), pp. 201–203. In fact, as regards *Περὶ εὑρέσεως* and *Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος*, these even seem to have been written by different authors, as they differ in terminology. See Kennedy (2005), ibid.

38 Mas Mas (2001), p. 4.

sion was lengthy, you will say these things compressed into few words, or the opposite.

What is the occasion for each of these? Deliberative oratory is open to lengthenings and shortenings but cannot accept a change of order [of the arguments], because in deliberation there must always first be something urgent for every speaker, while in panegyric the nature of the subject provides an unchangeable law about the order of the headings. Thus, we use lengthenings and shortenings, as Demosthenes did in the deliberative species in the Olynthiacs and in On the Soldiers in Chersonese. Although repeating himself, he mostly escaped notice. In the panegyric form, Plato escaped notice by saying the same things as Thucydides in his Epitaphios but seemed to say other things; at least Thucydides dismissed the subject of the wars after brief mention, while Plato elaborated it. On the other hand, Plato passed over the subject of the constitution and Thucydides elaborated it.

In the judicial species change of order has a place, as Demosthenes did in On the Immunity, for after Phormio had spoken against the law, using the headings of division—the just, the beneficial, the honorable, the question of worthiness—Demosthenes reversed the order. How he did this we described in our exegesis of the speech.[39]

Initially, the author defines in clear terms the technical "tools" by which the rhetorical effect of stating the same concept in different ways is achieved. He then defines what is most suitable to the genres of panegyric, deliberative and forensic, and goes on to provide examples. Basically, the declaimer can work on two elements: the change of the order (τάξεως μεταβολή) and the length (μήκη καὶ βραχύτητες). Mas Mas remarks that the term μῆκος should be intended as "exaustiveness" and βραχύτης as its opposite.[40] This process is openly identified with the use of παραφράζειν.[41] Such rhetorical strategies are the same as those discussed by Theon and Quintilian. Yet here they are applied to the main rhetorical speeches. It is not very clear if both length and order concern the parts of the speech, rather than the stylistic elaboration of sentences. What follows

39 Translation of Kennedy (2005), pp. 243–245.

40 Compare his translation, 33, n. 205, for the other technical meanings of the words: in this context, they appear closer to the sense of "extension" of the elements, as in Περὶ ἰδεῶν 275.26 μῆκος τῶν κώλων, while βραχύτης is the same as συντομία, as in Περὶ ἰδεῶν 383.6 and Ps.-Aristid. *Rh.* 53.9 βραχύτης δὲ καὶ συντομία γίνεται κατὰ γνώμην, κατὰ λέξιν.

41 Mas Mas (2001), p. 33, n. 206, quotes again Ps.-Aristid. *Rh.* 53.15 ff. κατὰ λέξιν δὲ γίνεται βραχύτης καὶ συντομία, ὅταν τις μὴ ταῖς παραφραστικαῖς τῶν λέξεων.

is actually a description of the suitability of such technicalities for the main rhetorical genres depending on their rules and aims. It is not what the handbooks call σύνθεσις ὀνομάτων (or *compositio verborum*), that is, the arrangement of words according to rhythmic harmony which tends to stylistic beauty and musical effects.[42] The orator must above all keep σαφήνεια (clarity) of meaning.[43]

Ps.-Hermogenes opens a section devoted to the occasion, the καιρός, for each of these techniques somewhat differently. The deliberative speech allows μήκη καὶ βραχύτητες, but not τάξεως μεταβολή. In the panegyric, the order of the facts has to be maintained, too, and extensions and reductions can be used in the same way as they are in the deliberative speech, as Demosthenes, Plato and Thucydides demonstrate. Demosthenes provides the examplar of the defence speech too, which allows the change of the order. Ps.-Hermogenes presents a choice of examples here that is close to that given by Theon, and, in particular, he presents Demosthenes,[44] who is also quoted as an author who is in the habit of paraphrasing his own writings (*Prog.* 63.31).

It is remarkable that Ps.-Hermogenes regards the paraphrase as an exercise in fiction. As the title of this section states, the aim is to express the same contents without showing it (λεληθότως). In other words, the orator's skills are evidently greater, if he manages to make the audience forget what has already been said, and gives the impression that he is saying something completely new. This is probably because Ps.-Hermogenes' treaty has a technical aspect, addressed to those who wish to use rhetoric for professional reasons. Quintilian prescribes paraphrase not just as an exercise in interpretation, but also as a competition with the original, aiming at its improvement, which implies that the audience has to recognise the original in order to appreciate the new version. In general, comparison with the great models of the past lies at the root of the whole of Greek literary production and this aspect is particularly significant in rhetorical paraphrase.

In this section, we have outlined the ancient theoretical background of poetic paraphrase. Nonnus' actual practice of paraphrasing involves all the principles explained by the theorists. Paraphrase enhances the original with regard to imagination (φαντασία), variety (ποικιλία), verbal charm and the beauty of the

42 An example is Dion. Hal. *De compositione verborum*. See Denys d'Halicarnasse, *Opuscules Rhétoriques*. Tome III. *La composition stylistique*. Texte établi et traduit par G. Aujac et M. Lebel (Paris 1981), pp. 12–41.

43 Pignani (1982), p. 22.

44 Also noticed by Mas Mas (2001), p. 34, n. 211.

result (*voluptas*, καλῶς ἐξενεγκεῖν, realised through vocabulary, phraseology and various figures of speech), and in regard to exegetical deepening. Paraphrase amplifies the original, but retains the structural order of its model, generally avoiding transpositions, the τάξεως μεταβολή. Paraphrase offers a stylistic improvement of the original, in that simple Greek prose is elevated to a Homeric register, for which a remarkable richness of expressive means is employed. The use of these techniques aims both to give aesthetic pleasure that the reader will derive from the paraphrase and also to increase the σαφήνεια of the original. This is an important feature, since Nonnus' paraphrase is a text conveying vital notions that need to be efficiently communicated to an educated audience of believers.

CHAPTER III

Non-amplificatory Paraphrase

When re-elaborating John's Gospel, in accord with the aesthetic principle of *poikilia*, Nonnus uses an impressive variety of rhetorical devices, associated with a wide range of lexical options, by which he modifies the stylistic form of the *Vorlage* without altering its essential meaning. In the broader context of the rhetorical expansion of the model (*amplificatio*) which generally characterises Nonnus' technique of rephrasing, it is sometimes possible to detect short sections of the model that are kept almost unchanged or even contracted, especially in the case of repetitions in John.[1] There are various reasons why Nonnus chose to closely follow the Gospel text, dependent on the specific frame of reference in each case. According to Theon, apart from addition, paraphrase can be also realised through omission, transposition and substitution; these three are mainly non-amplificatory techniques.[2] In this section we will look at examples of these methods that, rather than increasing the length of the original, retain or shorten it and at cases in which the order of the Johannine verses is changed. Our examples will elucidate the poet's limited use of "literal paraphrase", abbreviation and conflation and transposition.

A Literal Paraphrasis

In a very small number of short passages, the poet opts for a strictly literal rendering of the Johannine text. In general, Nonnus is likely to have opted for a literal paraphrase either for reasons of clarity or when the original text contains Biblical quotations. Staying very close to the original usually does not mean complete identification. Thus, literal paraphrase is normally achieved through a certain degree of *substitution*. For Theon, one of the techniques of

1 Livrea 1989, p. 54: "… questo processo di totale riscrittura evangelica si serve della prassi retorica dell'αὔξησις, e talvolta, ma ben più raramente, della *reductio ad unum* di certe iterazioni evangeliche".

2 15 Patillon-Bolognesi (pp. 107–108). According to the French translation of the Armenian version of Theon's text, the techniques are *l'addition, la soustraction, la syntaxe, la substitution*. *Adjectio, omissio, transpositio, immutatio* are the Latin terms of Quintilian (1.5,6 and 1.5,38), who uses them, however, in a different context. See above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*. For the possibility that substitution might also be amplificatory, see next note.

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paraphrase is "selon le mode de la substitution, lorsque nous enlevons le mot primitif pour le remplacer par un autre, en employant à la place de *doulos*, par exemple, *pais* ou *andrapodon* ou un des autres mots voisins", etc.[3] In staying faithful to the Gospel, Nonnus sometimes keeps its exact words and sometimes slightly changes them.

If we ignore partial repetitions of phrases whose meaning is straightforward, such as, for instance, καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει πόθεν ἐστίν (John 2.9) ~ οὐ μὲν ἀνὴρ πόθεν ἦεν ἠπίστατο (*Par.* 2.45), ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον (John 3.17) ~ κόσμον ἵνα κρίνειε προώριον (*Par.* 3.88), ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ (John 5.9) ~ καὶ τότε σάββατον ἦεν (*Par.* 5.35), ποῦ ἔστιν ἐκεῖνος; (John 7.11) ~ ποῖ κεῖνος; (*Par.* 7.39), Nonnus sometimes leaves (almost) unchanged characteristic sentences, significant or very special terms and distinctive phrases uttered by one or more persons. In the present section, we will examine some representative cases in which the Johannine text is kept unchanged, even if it is occasionally expanded with additional vocabulary. These instances exemplify the main criteria according to which Nonnus chooses to retain unaltered the phrasing of his model: the distinctiveness of the expression and the significance of the terms. We shall see that Nonnus does not change the famous Johannine προφήτης οὐκ ἔχει τιμήν (4.44), as well as certain characteristic phrasings. These may describe specific objects, ideas or events (νάρδος πιστική, John 12.3; πάσχα … ἑορτή, John 6.4), or someone's important words (ἐγὼ εἶπα, Θεοί ἐστε, John 10.34; ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον, John 16.33; μὴ γράφε, John 19.21; Nonnus actually duplicates this imperative so as to stress its meaning). Γράμματα and διδαχή in John 7.15 and 16, retained by Nonnus, actually represent important ideas which are further conveyed through the persons' talk. Especially in the latter case, where individuals' words are reproduced, it is evident that, contrary to what the reader might expect, the poet leaves these words alone in order to emphasise them.

At *Par.* 12.11 Nonnus refers to the fragrance used by Lazarus' sister Mary for anointing Christ's feet employing the exact Johannine term (12.3), as this is the name of the herb which produced the myrrh that Mark also reports (14.3): μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς. Nonnus adds the specification "so-called" (πιστικῆς … *φατιζομένης* ἀπὸ νάρδου), so that attention is drawn to the *verbatim* repetition of the botanological term. It should be further noted that the adjective πιστική qualifying the nard is found only in these two Gospel passages and thereafter in commentaries and references to them in extant Greek literature.

3 15 Patillon-Bolognesi (p. 108). This technique may also involve amplification, if it is not realised through substitution of one word by another, but through substitution of one by more words, which is also possible (Theon ibid.). Desbordes (1983, p. 24) categorises addition and subtraction as "quantitative" methods and mutation and modification as "qualitative".

At the beginning of Book 6, before the description of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, there is another instance of an almost literal paraphrase, concerning the statement that Easter was approaching:

> *Par.* 6.9–10
> καὶ σχεδὸν Ἑβραίοισι φιλόργιος ἦεν ἑορτή,
> πάσχα τόπερ καλέουσι
>
> And the time was near for the Hebrews of the ritual-loving feast / which they call the Passover

In these one and a half lines, corresponding to John 6.4 ἦν δὲ ἐγγὺς τὸ πάσχα, ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων (*now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand*), the poet does not insert any rhetorical device and restrains himself from dramatically changing the structure of the Gospel text. He makes a few lexical choices, thus merely rephrasing the text. Interestingly, he introduces an explanation concerning the Jewish term πάσχα ("what they call πάσχα"), which is typical of the paraphrastic process in the cases where the model contains a linguistic borrowing.[4] The adjective φιλόργιος is extremely rare[5] and represents a significant addition. Exactly because it pertains pagan mysteries, it is used here of the attitude of the Jews towards their feast, in order to stress the inferiority of old Jewish cult, here presented as outdated and similar to savage idolatry, in comparison to the new, purely spiritual religion.[6]

In 4.44, John reports Jesus' statement that no prophet is honoured in his own country: αὐτὸς γὰρ Ἰησοῦς ἐμαρτύρησεν ὅτι προφήτης ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ πατρίδι τιμὴν οὐκ ἔχει. Nonnus rephrases this statement, again in indirect speech, as μάρτυρα μῦθον ἔειπεν ἐτήτυμον, ὅττι προφήτης / οὐ δύναται περίπυστον ἔχειν ἐνὶ πατρίδι τιμήν (*he spoke a true, testifying word, that a prophet / cannot carry conspicuous honor in his own fatherland, Par.* 4.198–199). The basic terms which render the focal notion are identical to those of the *Vorlage*: οὐ … ἔχειν ἐνὶ πατρίδι τιμήν. The statement recurs, this time in direct speech, in Luke 4.24 ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ and is characteristic and repeatedly commented upon.[7] A similar case, in that Nonnus leaves almost

4 Giving explanations of foreign terms is a common practice in paraphrasing texts. On this technique, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, C. Explanations*.

5 It is found in Philodemus *AP* 10.21,7, attributed to Aphrodite, and in *IG* II^2 5021; see Franchi (2013), p. 290.

6 See Franchi (2013), p. 290.

7 For instance, Origen *Jo.* 13.54,364–369, 13.55,375 Blanc, John Chrys. *Jo.* PG 63.169,45–50, *al.*

unchanged a significant utterance by Jesus, is the last sentence of Book 16: *Par.* 16.127–129 ἀλλὰ καμόντες / θαρσαλέοι γίνεσθε, βροτῶν ὅτι μείζονα ῥέξω / κόσμον ἐγὼ νίκησα (*but, even though you are weary, / take heart, because my deeds are greater that those of mortals*; / *I have defeated the world*), rendering John 16.33 ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον. While Nonnus expands on Jesus' previous warning to the disciples, which can be extended to all His followers, that they will experience hardships, he repeats almost *verbatim* the Gospel phrasing of Jesus' crucial assertion that He annuls every sin, evil, danger, sorrow for which "world" stands for, this statement having been also frequently commented upon.[8]

In John 7.15, the Jews wonder how Jesus knows "letters", without being taught: πῶς οὗτος γράμματα οἶδεν μὴ μεμαθηκώς; (*how is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?*). After elaborating on the notion of γράμματα with the *periphrasis* ἔγγραφον αὐδήν (*Par.* 7.55), Nonnus actually reproduces closely the pivotal Johannine idea "to know letters" with his double, anaphoric repetition of it, only slightly changing the verbs that designate knowledge: γράμματα πῶς δεδάηκεν, ἃ μὴ μάθεν, ἴδμονι τέχνῃ; / γράμματα πῶς ἀδίδακτος ἐπίσταται; (*how is it that He learnt letters, which He did not study, with erudite art? / How is it that He knows letters untaught?, Par.* 7.56–57). With his emphatic reference to the same Johannine noun, γράμματα, Nonnus underlines the importance of the Johannine image of the Jews doubting Jesus' authority through their question about Jesus' command of reading and writing. Likewise, the poet also repeats the crucial noun of the Johannine Jesus' answer, διδαχή, and the notion of the knowledge which can be obtained from this διδαχή: ἡ ἐμὴ **διδαχὴ** οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὴ ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με· ἐάν τις θέλῃ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν, **γνώσεται** περὶ τῆς **διδαχῆς** πότερον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν, κτλ. (John 7.16–17);[9] οὐ **διδαχὴ** πολύϊδρις ἐμὴ πέλεν, ἀλλὰ τοκῆος, / ὅστις ἐμὲ προέηκεν. Ἀνὴρ δέ τις ἣν ἐθελήσῃ / **γνώσεται** ἡμετέρης **διδαχῆς** χάριν, κτλ. (*Par.* 7.59–61).[10] From Jesus' words Nonnus repeats unchanged the divine "teaching" and the susceptible man's reception of it, γνώσεται διδαχῆς. In this way, the poet emphasises the crucial Johannine ideas of

8 For instance, John Chrys. *In ep. ad Hebr.* PG 63.63,62–64 τὸ γὰρ πάντα μὲν παθεῖν, καθαρὸν δὲ εἶναι ἁμαρτημάτων, τοῦτό ἐστιν ("to suffer everything, but be free of sins, this is the meaning here"; our translation), Basil *Hom. super Ps.* PG 29.328,45–48, where Basil interprets divine protection as keeping people safe from the devil, *al.* See further the discussion of Schnackenburg (1982, vol. 3, p. 166), who remarks, *inter alia*, that "behind the cosmos is the 'evil one'".

9 *My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God*, etc.

10 *This knowledgeable teaching is not my own, but of my parent / who sent me. If a man wishes to, / he shall know about our teaching*, etc.

mankind being taught by Christ and the knowledge, resulting from this teaching, which will lead men to salvation. Nonnus leaves unchanged the important verb *γιγνώσκειν* in other instances, too, principally in passages reporting Christ's words.[11] The cardinal statement that the world "did not know / recognise" the Son of God, at the beginning of the Gospel *καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω* (1.10) is elaborated by Nonnus in a *periphrasis*, a part of which, however, does repeat the crucial verb γιγνώσκειν: *καὶ λόγον οὐ γίγνωσκεν ἐπήλυδα κόσμος ἀλήτης* (*Par.* 1.29). All in all, although there are instances in which Nonnus replaces γιγνώσκειν with ἐπίστασθαι, δαῆναι, etc., he does frequently keep it, so that the *Paraphrase* might evoke as intensively and straightforwardly as possible the fundamental notion of γνῶσις, incomplete in humans, perfect in God and attainable to men through Christ. Cyril also emphasises the idea of γνῶσις in his commentary on various passages of John.[12]

In 10.121 ff., during the feast of the dedication of the Temple, the Jewish crowd asks about Jesus' identity and Jesus answers. The paraphrast sticks to the direct speech appearing in the *Vorlage*, and although he employs the technique of *amplificatio* (which will be discussed below) to elaborate it, two short phrases (capitalised) are given unchanged. These are examples of literal paraphrase incorporated into a more articulated rendering of the text.

***Par.* 10.121–128**	**John 10.34–35**
ἀντιπόρῳ δὲ Χριστὸς ἀναμφήριστον ἔπος μυθήσατο λαῷ· "οὐ νόμος ὑμείων κεχαραγμένα ταῦτα κομίζει· '**ΕἾΠΟΝ ἘΓΏ· ΘΕΟΊ ἘΣΤΕ**'; καὶ εἰ χθονίων τινὰς ἀνδρῶν, οἷς τότε μοῦνον ἵκανε θεοῦ λόγος ἶσος ὀνείρῳ, ὑμετέρου θεσμοῖο θεοὺς ἐκάλεσσεν ἀοιδή— καὶ γραφικῆς βίβλοιο παλίλλυτος ἔμμεναι ὀμφή **ΟΎ ΔΎΝΑΤΑΙ**".	ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς, οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένον ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν ὅτι **ἘΓΩ͂ ΕἼΠΑ, ΘΕΟΊ ἘΣΤΕ**; Εἰ ἐκείνους εἶπεν θεοὺς πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ **ΟΎ ΔΎΝΑΤΑΙ** λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή.

11 John 8.28 τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι ~ *Par.* 8.69 τότε γνώσεσθε καὶ αὐτοί, the famous John 8.32 καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς ~ *Par.* 8.79–80 τότε γνώσεσθε καὶ αὐτοί / οἶμον ἀληθείης θεοτερπέος, κτλ., John 13.35 γνώσονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταί ἐστε ~ *Par.* 13.35–37 ἵνα γνώωσιν ἰδόντες / … ὅτι … / … Χριστοῖο θεουδέες ἐστὲ μαθηταί, John 14.7 καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου γνώσεσθε ~ *Par.* 14.26 ἐξ ἐμέθεν γνώσεσθε καὶ ὑψιμέδοντα τοκῆα, John 5.42 ἀλλὰ ἔγνωκα ὑμᾶς ~ *Par.* 5.160–161 ἀλλά που ἔγνων / ὑμέας.

12 For instance, commenting on John 1.10, Cyril stresses the notion of knowledge (which results in θεογνωσία) and its absence from humans (1.128,24–25 Pusey). Furthermore, to

(*cont.*)

Par. **10.121–128**	**John 10.34–35**
To the opposing multitude Christ spoke an unequivocal word: "Does your law not have these things inscribed: 'I said: you are gods'? And if some earthly men, to whom the word of God arrived then only like a dream, were called gods by the chant of your law— and the voice of the book of scripture cannot be loosed again".	Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken".

Nonnus does not obey to strict guidelines in paraphrasing Biblical citations. The passage above shows that certain quotations can be left almost unaltered. The sentence ἐγὼ εἶπα, Θεοί ἐστε comes from the *Psalms* (82.6) and Nonnus chooses to reproduce it *verbatim*, whilst he feels free to dramatically rework the rest of the text. In fact, the two Gospel verses have been expanded by nine lines through the use of a number of rhetorical figures, such as the strong *hyperbaton*, ἀντιπόρῳ δέ / … λαῷ which precedes Christ's reply and the short *periphrasis* which replaces the Johannine verb ἀπεκρίθη, split into adjective-noun-verb: ἀναμφήριστον ἔπος μυθήσατο. Furthermore, the plain γεγραμμένον of John is replaced by the solemn participle κεχαραγμένα,[13] so that only the term νόμος is retained from the Gospel.

However, Nonnus leaves the quotation from the Psalms unaltered. In this case, the fidelity to the original can be explained as a deliberate choice in view of the importance and characteristic quality of the words "ἐγὼ εἶπα, Θεοί ἐστε" uttered by Jesus. It has been argued that, whenever a paraphrast assumes that the "cogency of an argument depends on the Biblical passage being recognised",[14] he considers that the safest strategy is to stick to the original without

take one more relevant instance, with regard to Paul's teaching, Cyril insists on the idea of knowledge and wisdom, embodied in Christ in 1.64,7–18 Pusey.

13 The verb χαράσσω is largely employed by Nonnus in various metaphorical ways, both in the *Paraphrase* and in the *Dionysiaca*. See Peek (1968–1975), s.v.; also Gigli Piccardi (1985), p. 151. In some instances from the *Paraphrase* the verb indicates the action of "ploughing" the water (6.72 καὶ δολιχοῖς ἐλατῆρες ὕδωρ ἐχάρασσον ἐρετμοῖς), sealing (21.141 ὅσσα καθ' ἓν στοιχηδὸν ἀνὴρ βροτὸς αἴκε χαράξῃ), writing (20.139 ὃς τάδε πάντα χάραξε, θελήμονι κάλλιπε σιγῇ, on which see Accorinti 1996, p. 230).

14 Roberts (1985), p. 137.

altering it. Despite this, it should be stressed, once more, that Nonnus does not always simply paraphrase Biblical quotations in his reworking of the Gospel, since we have numerous instances that show a good deal of modification and variation in the rendering of Biblical quotes.[15] Besides the need to keep the quotation as it is, so that it remains recognisable, the demands of metre also have to be taken into account: the phrase perfectly suits the hexameter verse here, as it is formed by two dactyls and one trochee, which also enables the poet to employ the *caesura* κατὰ τρίτον τροχαῖον.

Immediately after the citation, Nonnus resumes the technique of expanding and embellishing the text, as is demonstrated by the presence of a mild *hyperbaton* in the line below (124) χθονίων / ἀνδρῶν, followed by a simile λόγος ἶσος ὀνείρῳ and by an alliteration, θεσμοῖο θεούς, and by the poetic term ἀοιδή which replaces the λόγος of the Gospel. The paraphrastic process involves replacing the Gospel term γραφή with the more evocative, almost metaphorical, ὀμφή,[16] related to adjective παλίλλυτος, a Nonnian coinage,[17] which replaces the Gospel's λυθῆναι. The adjective ὑψιμέδων, poetic and traditionally used of Zeus,[18] is employed here to characterise the Christian God. In this context of a highly re-elaborated poetic text, we have again a short segment of literal paraphrase regarding the main verb οὐ δύναται. In this case, Nonnus prefers to keep it unchanged, probably because, although Johannine concision makes the assertion stronger and more authoritative, significantly the four syllables of the phrase form one and a half dactyl.

It is worth examining one last passage, taken from Book 19, where the Jews are beseeching Pilate not to write on the Cross "King of the Jews". Here the paraphrast retains many elements from the *Vorlage* (in italics). In rigorously technical terms, this may not be a case of strictly literal paraphrase. The reworking of the Gospel text here is rather mild and Nonnus follows the original text quite closely, evidently concerned not to deviate much from it, especially in regard to a number of key elements.

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15 For instance, 12.55 ff. include a rather free treatment of two Biblical quotations, already present in the Gospel, the first of which is completely omitted (*Ps.* 118.26, corresponding to John 12.13), whereas the second one (*Zc.* 9.9 corresponding to 12.15) is re-elaborated rather freely in lines 65–69. Similarly at 19.120–133 the Biblical quotation concerning Christ's tunic at John 19.24 (corresponding to *Ps.* 22.19) is considerably reworked.

16 The word encompasses the idea of "voice endowed with divine power"; see Lightfoot (2016), p. 637. See also Lightfoot (2017), pp. 144, 148–149.

17 It seems to be a Nonnian coinage, as the only other occurrence is John of Gaza 2.190.

18 For instance, Hes. *Th.* 529, Bacch. 14.51, Pind. *N.* 2.19.

***Par.* 19.110–115**	**John 19.21–22**
καὶ Πιλάτον λιτάνευον ὁμήλυδες *ἀρχιερῆες·* *μὴ γράφε, μὴ γράφε* τοῦτον Ἰουδαίων *βασιλῆα,* *ἀλλ' ὅτι κεῖνος* ἔλεξεν ἑῇ ψευδήμονι φωνῇ· “κοίρανος Ἑβραίων τελέθω *σκηπτοῦχος* Ἰησοῦς”. *καὶ Πιλάτος* φάτο μῦθον ἀπηνέας ἄνδρας ἐλέγχων· “*ἔγραφον* ἀσφαλέως, *τόπερ ἔγραφον*”.	ἔλεγον οὖν τῷ Πιλάτῳ οἱ *ἀρχιε-ρεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Μὴ γράφε,* Ὁ *βασιλεὺς* τῶν Ἰουδαίων, *ἀλλ' ὅτι* ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, Βασιλεύς εἰμι τῶν Ἰουδαίων. Ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλᾶτος, *Ὃ γέγραφα, γέγραφα.*
And the high priests came together and entreated Pilate: “Write not, write not that he is the king of the Jews, but that he said in his mendacious voice: ‘I am the lord of the Hebrews, scepter-wielding Jesus’ ”. And Pilate spoke this word, reproving the cruel men: “I wrote with certainty that which I wrote”.	So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews’, but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews’ ”. Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written”.

The rhetorical devices are here somewhat limited and Nonnus makes use of a moderate lexical rephrasing which is based on epic terms. The intense, Homeric λιτάνευον replaces the neutral ἔλεγον, the adjective ὁμήλυδες is added, the Homeric κοίρανος replaces βασιλεύς, τελέθω stands for εἰμί, the Homeric adjective σκηπτοῦχος (usually attributed to kings)[19] is inserted and, eventually the Homeric φάτο μῦθον is a short *periphrasis* which renders the Johannine ἀπε-κρίθη.[20]

The phrase μὴ γράφε, μὴ γράφε (*Par.* 19.111) literally duplicates the Gospel. At the same time, it fits easily into the metrical scheme, as μὴ γράφε is a dactyl. Variation lies here in the repetition of the negative imperative, by means of which the rage of the Jewish crowd against Christ is more strongly emphasised. In a similar way, in the almost literal ἔγραφον … τόπερ ἔγραφον another dactyl is employed twice, reproducing the Johannine repetition ὃ γέγραφα, γέγραφα. Nonnus retains the Johannine verb (γράφω) and repeats it four times. This is remarkable, especially given that Nonnus' attitude towards repetitions is usually the opposite: he tends systematically to eliminate them. In this case, it may be that Nonnus, in this almost literal rendering of the Gospel, intended

19 For instance, *Il.* 1.279, 2.86, *Od.* 2.231, 5.9, *al.*

20 For an examination of the use of Homeric vocabulary in selected passages of the *Paraphrase*, see Ypsilanti (2016).

to retain unaltered the passionate tone of the Johannine scene by reusing the most emblematic elements of its vocabulary.

Leaving aside the almost literal elements, in the Nonnian rendering of the Gospel we can also trace the influence of Cyril's comment, which seems to be echoed in two lexical features: namely in the adjective ψευδήμονι and in the participle ἐλέγχων,[21] which characterise the words of the Jews and Pilate's attitude respectively.[22]

B Abbreviations and Conflations

In rhetorical terms, and according to Theon's categoristion of the four ways by means of which the paraphrase is achieved, the opposite of *adjectio* is *omissio*, or "subtraction".[23] Nonnus rarely abbreviates and summarises Gospel verses. In the few instances in which he actually abridges the text, usually he does so in order to eliminate repetition. In such cases he summarises a phrase or removes individual elements of it. The paraphrastic technique of abbreviation is, to a certain extent, equivalent to that of conflation. In the latter case, however, the poet combines two or more elements of a phrase contained in his model, through the use of a single verb, noun, or adjective, which encapsulates more than one component of the original text. One of the basic strategies employed by a paraphrast to expand a text is to use two or more synonyms[24] in the place of one noun or adjective. In the opposite procedure, abbreviation, the text is shortened, as at least two terms or phrases are condensed into a single one. This occurs when the two Johannine terms or phrases convey the same meaning and the poet apparently regards them as a kind of repetition which he removes, to increase the intensity of the focus of his narrative.[25] Abbreviation and / or

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21 3.86,15–18 Pusey ἐκ πολλῆς ἄγαν τῆς ἐνούσης αὐτοῖς εὐηθείας ἠγνοηκότες καὶ τοῦτο, ὡς οὐκ ἂν **ΨΕΥΔΟΜΥΘΉΣΑΙ** ποτὲ τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ φύσις· ἀλήθεια δὲ ὁ Χριστός· βασιλεὺς οὖν ἄρα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, εἴπερ οὕτως ἑαυτὸν **ἘΛΈΓΧΕΤΑΙ** κεκληκὼς καθὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ δι' οἰκείας τοῦτο κρατύνουσι φωνῆς (*in their great ignorance they did not realise that truth by nature could never lie. And Christ is the truth. Therefore, he is in fact "King of the Jews" if he is proved to have given himself this title, as they themselves confirm with their own words*).

22 On Nonnus' anti-Jewish prejudice and on the not wholly negative characterisation of Pilate, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 4. Pontius Pilate*.

23 Theon 15 Patillon-Bolognesi (p. 108). See above, *III. Non-amplificatory Paraphrase*, introductory essay, and *I. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

24 For which see below, on *Amplificatio*, intr. note.

25 A few instances from the beginning of the Gospel (John 1.15 ~ *Par.* 1.47, John 1.26 ~ *Par.*

conflation are often blended with amplification. The Nonnian term that summarises the terms of the *Vorlage* can be elaborated through a relative expansion which emphasises a specific aspect of it.

Nonnus merges together either whole sentences or specific words, usually verbs or nouns. In doing so, he often avoids repetitions and smooths the rhythm of the narration. Instances which involve what might look like an omission at first glance may be in fact cases of abbreviation, as the ostensibly omitted term may be latent somewhere else in the Nonnian reworking. Various representative examples of the technique of "shortening", which, almost paradoxically, coexists with the expansion of the original text, will be examined in this section. The selected passages exemplify cases of mixture. This can involve single terms, whether these are nouns ("thieves and bandits") or verbs ("wrote and placed"), or whole phrases.

To begin with, we shall look at cases in which two terms are united to form one. The Johannine couple κλέπτης and λῃστής of Book 10 eloquently illustrates Nonnus' combination of abbreviation of single terms and simultaneous amplification.

***Par.* 10.5**	**John 10.1**
ληιστὴρ πέλεν οὗτος ἀνὴρ ληίστορι ταρσῷ	ἐκεῖνος κλέπτης ἐστὶν καὶ λῃστής
that man is a thief on thieving feet	that man is a thief and a robber

In his description of the thief as opposed to the Good Shepherd, Nonnus condenses John's phrase, removing John's noun κλέπτης and expressing the idea of the bandit with a single noun, ληιστήρ. He elaborates the concept of robbery with a polyptoton, ληιστήρ / ληίστορι, the second element of which is a *hypallage*, referring to the *synecdoche* ταρσῷ and introducing the image of the thief's foot. The amplification of the term which replaces the Johannine pair "thief and bandit" gives visual form to the thief's sly pace, i.e. his guileful approach to its victim and consequently his deviousness. Such an expansion of the phrasing magnifies and emphasises the danger presented by the intruder more emphatically than is the case in the Johannine account.

1.94, John 1.31 ~ *Par.* 1.109) are presented as examples of this technique by Kuhn (1906, p. 132).

Likewise, some verses below, Nonnus once again depicts the thieves and this time uses the term φῶρες as a substitute for the two synonyms of the Gospel κλέπται and λῃσταί.

Par. 10.26–27	John 10.8
φῶρες ἔσαν δολόεντες· ὅθεν ληίστορι φωνῇ αὐτῶν φθεγγομένων οὐκ ἔκλυε πώεα ποίμνης.	κλέπται εἰσὶν καὶ λῃσταί· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἤκουσαν αὐτῶν τὰ πρόβατα
(those who …) were deceitful thieves; therefore, when with thieving voice they spoke, the flocks of the drove did not listen.	(All who came before me) are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

The poet places φῶρες in anastrophe with the adjective δολόεντες, which bears Odyssean connotations[26] and stresses the bandits' ruse. As he did earlier, here, too, Nonnus, instead of using synonyms, adds terms which expand on the bandits' evilness. He elaborates on the thieves' trickery with a whole phrase. Ληίστορι φωνῇ is formed by a variation on the idea of the Johannine λῃστής and is introduced so as to highlight the deceit of the thieves' voice, i.e. the cunning and danger of the voice of the false prophets. John refers to these persons simply, without any hint at the quality of their voice (οὐκ ἤκουσαν, κτλ.).

In Book 19, in the context of the description of the Crucifixion, we have another instance of fusion and / or replacement of words, rather than of phrases, which condenses and intensifies the picture. The following couplet exemplifies the unification of two verbs into a single verb:

Par. 19.101–102	John 19.19
καὶ Πιλάτος θηητὸν ἐπέγραφε μάρτυρι δέλτῳ γράμμα, τόπερ καλέουσι Λατινίδι τίτλον ἰωῇ	ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλᾶτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ
And Pilate inscribed a conspicuous engraving on a testifying tablet, which in the Latin tongue they call 'titulus'	Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross.

26 For instance, *Od.* 7.245, 8.281, 9.32.

The paraphrast merges together one of the two Gospel verbs (ἔγραψεν) and the preposition (ἐπί) into the compound verb ἐπέγραφε, skipping the second aorist (ἔθηκεν). He thus replaces the copulative juxtaposition ἔγραψεν δέ … καὶ ἔθηκεν with a verb which designates a single action, thereby accelerating the rhythm of the narrative at this point. Moreover, the Latin borrowing,[27] explained in line 102, is translated by the Greek term δέλτῳ, joined to the *hypallage* μάρτυρι. The adjective θηητόν replaces, in an impressively concise and effective way, the prepositional phrase ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

In other passages, the poet blends together phrases to avoid repetitions. At *Par.* 13.20–25, in the context of the washing of the disciples' feet, a short section of the Gospel verse (13.5) has been drastically reworked in that, in addition to the usual *amplificatio*, it also contains a small omission, and the sequence of the Gospel verse has been slightly modified:

***Par.* 13.19–24**	**John 13.4–5**
καὶ χροὸς αἰγλήεντος ἑοὺς ἀπέθηκε χιτῶνας καὶ λινέην λαγόνεσσι νόθην ἐζώσατο μίτρην σφίγξας σκληρὸν ὕφασμα, τόπερ φάτο Θυμβριὰς αὐδή λίντεον, ἰκμαλέοιο ποδὸς μακτήριον ἀνδρῶν. Καὶ γλαφυρῷ νιπτῆρι βαλὼν ὑποκόλπιον ὕδωρ Χριστὸς ἑῶν ἑτάρων φιλίους πόδας ἤρξατο νίπτειν	καὶ τίθησιν τὰ ἱμάτια, καὶ λαβὼν λέντιον διέζωσεν ἑαυτόν. Εἶτα βάλλει ὕδωρ εἰς τὸν νιπτῆρα καὶ ἤρξατο νίπτειν τοὺς πόδας τῶν μαθητῶν *καὶ ἐκμάσσειν τῷ λεντίῳ ᾧ ἦν διεζωσμένος.*
and took off His own tunic from His gleaming body, and girded himself around His flanks with a makeshift linen girdle, binding tight the stiff fabric which the Tiberine tongue called "linteum", to make it into a towel for the men's wet feet. And putting subterraneous water into the hollow basin, Christ began to wash the feet of His companions	He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

A segment of the Gospel text (καὶ ἐκμάσσειν τῷ λεντίῳ ᾧ ἦν διεζωσμένος) is not paraphrased, most probably because it is partly a repetition of the statement appearing in the previous verse (4), which specifies that Christ wraps Him-

27 On foreign terms, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, C. Explanations*.

self with a cloth (διέζωσεν ἑαυτόν).[28] Nonnus keeps the characteristic Johannine verb ζωννύναι, which describes Christ's famous action.[29] At ll. 24–25 the order of the Gospel text is inverted, as the noun μακτήριον[30] corresponds to and renders the verb ἐκμάσσειν, and the phrase ἤρξατο νίπτειν is kept unaltered, although in a different place in the sentence. In this instance, two different paraphrastic techniques, omission and transposition, are combined. Furthermore, the adjectival phrase ἰκμαλέοιο ποδὸς μακτήριον ἀνδρῶν replaces the construction with the infinitive of the original and offers stylistic sophistication, in that this avoids a syntax formed by consecutive copulative conjunctions.

Replacement of a verbal with a substantial phrase, which might look like an omission, in fact occurs in *Par.* 20.12 ff. Here it is reported how Mary Magdalene came back from the empty tomb and broke the news to the disciples:

***Par.* 20.12–16**	**John 20.2**
ἐπειγομένῳ δὲ πεδίλῳ νόστιμος εἰς δόμον ἦλθε· κατωπιόωντι δὲ Πέτρῳ ἀγγελίην ἑτέρῳ τε συνενδιάοντι μαθητῇ, κοίρανος ὃν φιλέεσκε, μιῇ ξυνώσατο φωνῇ ἀμφὶ τάφου κενεοῖο.	τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον μαθητὴν ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, *Ἦραν τὸν κύριον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου, καὶ οὐκ οἴδαμεν ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν.*
With hurrying sandal she came back to the house; to downcast Peter and to the other disciple who shared his haunts, the one the Lord loved, she shared with one voice the message about the empty tomb.	So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him".

28 See Greco (2004) ad loc., pp. 88–90.

29 The phrasing is repeated with variations which retain the verb in exegetical patristic passages: cf., for instance, Basil *Ascet.* PG 31.981,32, *Reg. Mor.* PG 31.856,43, John Chrys. *Jo.* PG 59.383,12–13, Greg. Nyss. *In Cant. Cant.* 6.330,20 Langerbeck (H. Langerbeck, *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vol. 6, Leiden 1960, 3–469).

30 A correction of the ἀλκτήριον or ἀλητήριον of the codices; see Greco (2004), pp. 87–88, on *Par.* 13.22.

The Gospel phrase of two verbs connected with καί (τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται) is rendered by one verb (ἦλθε), modified by a predicative (νόστιμος) and qualified by an adjectival participle and noun in the dative (ἐπειγομένῳ δὲ πεδίλῳ), which replaces the verb τρέχει, exactly as the phrase built around the noun μακτήριον of 13.22, discussed above, replaces the description of the action expressed with the infinitive ἐκμάσσειν. The second part of John 20.2 is drastically summarised by the brief turn of phrase ἀμφὶ τάφου κενεοῖο that encapsulates the whole final sentence through a process of abbreviation / conflation of the text, in which, in a sense, the underlined section of the Gospel verse is omitted. The poet did not elaborate on the angst expressed in the question of the disciples, who ask themselves where the body of the Lord is. In this case he opted for the concision of a rough statement ἀμφὶ τάφου κενεοῖο, which creates an effect comparable to a kind of tragic irony, since it is assumed that the reader already knows the reason why the tomb is empty.

Occasionally we do find conflations of phrases which can be taken in a strict sense as small omissions. A closer look at the text shows that they are in fact conflations, since the content of the "omitted" phrase is incorporated somewhere in Nonnus' rephrasing. At *Par.* 19.182–185, when speaking about John as witness of Jesus' death, the poet abridges John's account, while avoiding its repetitions and also omitting a final clause:

***Par.* 19.182–184**	**John 19.35**
ἀνὴρ δ', ὅστις ὄπωπεν, ἑῷ πιστώσατο μύθῳ μαρτυρίην ἀτίνακτον· ἀριστονόοιο δὲ κείνου ἴδμεν ὅτι ζαθέη καὶ ἐτήτυμος ἔπλετο φωνή. The man who saw this pledged with his word an unshaken testimony. And we know that the voice of that excellently wise man was sacred and true.	καὶ ὁ ἑωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύσητε. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.

Although we have an accumulation of adjectives that creates *amplificatio*, which blurs, to a certain extent, the actual effect of the abbreviation, in fact the section of the Gospel has been summarised, whilst a number of elements of the *Vorlage* are retained: μεμαρτύρηκεν and μαρτυρία are condensed in one word, μαρτυρίην. Πιστώσατο anticipates the Gospel πιστεύσητε which does not appear

in the Nonnian reworking: the Johannine phrase ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύσητε is actually omitted, or rather absorbed into the Nonnian πιστώσατο, a cognate, though not identical, verb. Eventually, ζαθέη καὶ ἐτήτυμος φωνή replaces ἀληθῆ, which occurs in John in an emphatic repetition (ἀληθινή / ἀληθῆ) that is avoided in the paraphrased text. The term ζαθέη further adds the aspect of divine quality to the one-dimensional Johannine "true". Thus Nonnus fills his account with terms that express divine truth and faith and omits the final clause "so that you also may believe", addressed to the audience of the Gospel, without discarding its content, since he has previously spoken of a witness whose testimony is trustworthy and confirmed (πιστώσατο): this idea actually encompasses the idea of the reader's / listener's faith conveyed by the πιστεύσητε of John's final clause.[31]

At *Par.* 15.8–9 we have an instance of the absorption, as it were, of a Johannine main clause into verb complements in Nonnus, which can be also regarded as a pseudo-omission. This absorption coexists with an emphatic anaphoric repetition developed in two symmetrical lines of balanced construction:

Par. **15.8–9**	**John 15.4**
μίμνετε συμπεφυῶτες ἐμῷ παλιναυξέι θάμνῳ, μίμνετε συμπεφυῶτες ἐμοί, βλαστήματα κόσμου.	μείνατε ἐν ἐμοί κἀγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν.
Stay, growing together into one, on my ever-growing plant; Stay, growing together into one with me, offshoots for the world.	Abide in me, and I in you.

John's κἀγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν (sc. μενῶ) is at first sight missing in Nonnus. However, this is not exactly an omission, as Jesus' assertion that He also will remain embedded in the disciples, which completes and adds mutuality to the request that the disciples remain in Christ, is expressed, rather than omitted, through the participle συμπεφυῶτες and its complement ἐμῷ παλιναυξέι θάμνῳ, and also through the repetition of the imperative clause which conveys Jesus' invitation. Nonnus transforms the Johannine Christ's statement that He (κἀγώ) will remain in the disciples into the elaboration of the concept of the unifying bond which

31 Nonnus deals similarly with *Par.* 4.245, where he produces a variation on the original, replacing πιστώσατο with ἀκαμπέα δέξατο πειθώ (*he received unbending faith*). See Volpe Cacciatore (2006), p. 107.

will be created between master and pupils. This idea is expressed through the emphatic repetition of the personal pronoun ἐμῷ / ἐμοί. The latter is governed by συμπεφυῶτες and the former is part of a juncture governed by συμπεφυῶτες, a term highlighting the idea of close attachment or union. This is comparable to the Nonnian use of compounds of φύειν in connection to the unity of the persons of the Trinity.[32] In *Par.* 15.8–9 Nonnus implicitly places the closeness of the relation between Father and Son in parallel with the closeness of the relation between Christ and disciples, actually anticipating, with added emphasis, the idea of the comparable love between Father and Son and Son and pupils, which John elaborates just below: John 15.9 καθὼς ἠγάπησέν με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ ὑμᾶς ἠγάπησα· μείνατε ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐμῇ.[33] The reciprocity in Jesus' and the disciples' abiding in one another, though "omitted" through the omission of κἀγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν, is further implied both by the unity expressed with συμπεφυῶτες ἐμῷ ... θάμνῳ, and by the emphatic *anaphora* μίμνετε συμπεφυῶτες and the similar structure of the symmetrical consecutive lines. Both these lines are divided by the feminine caesura, which produces a pause after the personal pronoun and leaves each verse end with metrically equivalent *juncturae* (παλιναυξέι θάμνῳ, βλαστήματα κόσμου). These *juncturae* also introduce the idea of flora that John goes on to elaborate through the vine imagery. With this rhetorical elaboration Nonnus seems to be developing the vocabulary that Cyril uses in his comment on John 15.4, since the participle προσπεφυκότων describes in Cyril the attachment of the branches, human soul, to the vine, the Son, through love and faith.[34]

The representative examples discussed in this section demonstrate the variety of manner in which Nonnus amalgamates words or phrases and shortens some parameters of the narration while expanding others. He therefore usually avoids paratactic syntax, while he may on occasion create *asyndeta* to endow his narration with a poetic fluency of rhythm.

32 See below, *IV. Amplificatio, H. Interpretatio, 2. Trinitarian Theology, a. Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity, vi. Par. 14.31–48: σύννομος, σύζυγος, σύμφυτος.*

33 *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.* For the love between Christ and disciples as parallel to the love between Father and Son, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, F. Handling of Speech (Direct / Indirect / Dialogue), 4. Introductory and Other "Comments" in Dialogic Speech Exchanges*, discussion of *Par.* 14.86–88 and 17.37, *inter alia.*

34 *Jo.* 2.559,26 Pusey. On this echo, see further Savelli (1998), p. 98.

C Sequence and Transpositions

John's narration proceeds generally smoothly, starting from a specific point and following the story of Jesus' ministry in a given order of events. However, the sequence of events is often interrupted by features which are called *prolepses* and *analepses* in narratology, in other words, references to events that occurred in the past (*analepses*) or that are to occur in the future (*prolepses*).[35] As regards another narratological category, duration, the speed of the Gospel's narration is not even, since the story is told sometimes in scenes, which involve more detailed narratives, and sometimes in summaries.[36] Nonnus' reworking generally follows the progression of the Gospel verses strictly, without any radical modification of their order, including the cases of *prolepses* and *analepses*. Nevertheless, Nonnus often amplifies the *prolepses* and the *analepses* of John and even, albeit rarely, introduces *prolepses* and *analepses* absent from the Gospel.[37]

On the level of syntax, transposition (τάξεως μεταβολή) is one of the methods of paraphrasing, according to Ps. Hermogenes.[38] This feature is the so-called μετάθεσις (*transmutatio*), described by Theon as paraphrase "according to syntax" (15, p. 108,2 Patillon-Bolognesi).[39] Changes in the sequence in which the Gospel verses appear is rarely detected in the *Paraphrase*. On certain occasions we may trace "internal" transpositions, namely small alterations of the order in which single elements are found in the Johannine phrases. These components might occur scattered in the corresponding re-elaborated poetic text.

The following few examples illustrate how Nonnus alters the Johannine order for reasons either of emphasis or of improvement of the narration's coherence.

35 See Culpepper (1983), pp. 54–70.

36 See Culpepper (1983), pp. 70–73.

37 See Giraudet (2012), §§ 18–32. For Nonnus' additions of *prolepses*, see § 28. For *analepses*, §§ 25–26.

38 Περὶ τοῦ λεληθότως τὰ αὐτὰ λέγειν ἢ ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἄλλοις, 24, 440.6–441.14 Rabe. See above, *The Rhetorical Background to the Paraphrase in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Treatises, C. Paraphrase as a School Exercise. The Chreia, 3. Ps.-Hermogenes, Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος* (*On the Method of Forceful Speaking*).

39 See above, *III. Non-amplificatory Paraphrase*, introductory essay, and *I. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

Par. 7.98–99	**John 7.26**
ἠνίδε πῶς παλίνορσος ὅλῳ θηήτορι λαῷ ἀμφαδίην ἀδόνητος ἐρεύγεται ἠθάδα φωνήν.	καὶ ἴδε παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν αὐτῷ λέγουσιν.
Behold how, coming back, in front of the entire gazing multitude he cries out his familiar voice in the open, unshaken.	And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him!

The passage belongs to the description of the feast of the Tabernacles. In this case the transposition is combined with an abbreviation / conflation, as οὐδὲν αὐτῷ λέγουσιν is summarised in the short expression ὅλῳ θηήτορι λαῷ, stressing the point that the people were looking at Jesus and suggesting that they were not speaking, whereas *Par.* 7.99 corresponds to John's παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖ. By reversing the Gospel's order and placing ὅλῳ θηήτορι λαῷ before the account of Jesus' talking to the people, Nonnus places Jesus' talk in the foreground and implies the people's amazement at it.

In the first section of Book 10, in the context of the parable of the Good Shepherd (ll. 45–48) and in the episode of the dedication of the Temple (ll. 97–99), another two minor transpositions can be traced:

Par. 10.45–48	**John 10.12–13**
κρυπτὸς ἀλυσκάζων ὑποδύεται· οὐκ ἀλέγει δὲ μήλων ἀλλοτρίων, ὅτι μίσθιος αὐτὸς ἀκούει· καὶ λύκος ἀγκυλόμητις ἐπέρχεται ἅρπαγι λαιμῷ μῆλα διασκεδάσας σημάντορος οὐ παρεόντος.	καὶ ὁ λύκος ἁρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει τὰ πρόβατα. Ὁ δὲ μισθωτὸς φεύγει, ὅτι μισθωτός ἐστιν καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων.
He hides, skulks, and slips away; he does not care about another's sheep, because he is called a hired servant; and the crooked-minded wolf comes upon them with plundering throat, and scatters the sheep, because no herdsman is present.	And the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

After the repetition of the hemistich κρυπτὸς ἀλυσκάζων ὑποδύεται, which has been already used by Nonnus two lines above, at *Par.* 10.43,[40] the paraphrast inserts οὐκ ἀλέγει δὲ μήλων ἀλλοτρίων, ὅτι μίσθιος αὐτὸς ἀκούει, corresponding to ὅτι μισθωτός ἐστιν καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων. This comes after καὶ ὁ λύκος ἁρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει the Gospel comes, corresponding to *Par.* 10.47–48. Nonnus is perhaps "correcting" the logical order of the narration, since the fact that the hired shepherd does not look after the sheep is the precondition for the wolf's attack. Nonnus closes the section with the genitive absolute σημάντορος οὐ παρεόντος, which reprises concisely the idea of the hired shepherd's absence.

***Par.* 10.97–99**	**John 10.27**
οὔασι θελγομένοισιν ἐμῆς ὅτι πώεα ποίμνης γῆρυν ἐμὴν ἀίει καὶ ἐφέσπεται ἡγεμονῆι· γινώσκω δ' ἐμὰ μῆλα.	τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἐμὰ τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούουσιν, κἀγὼ γινώσκω αὐτά, καὶ ἀκολουθοῦσίν μοι.
because the flocks of my drove listen to my voice with enchanted ears, and follow their leader. I know my own sheep	My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

In ll. 97–99 the order of the Gospel text is slightly altered. Nonnus replaces the Johannine ἀκολουθοῦσιν with the more poetic synonym ἐφέσπεται and changes the personal pronoun μοι into a noun, thus introducing the image of the guide-leader ἡγεμονεύς. In the re-elaboration of the original, the sequence of the Gospel text is modified, as γινώσκω δ' ἐμὰ μῆλα comes after ἐφέσπεται ἡγεμονῆι. Here, again, the logical order of the narration is restored: in contrast to the Gospel, where the statement "I know them" appears *between* the account of how the sheep hear Jesus' voice and how they follow him, the sequence of acts is more coherent if Jesus states that the sheep hear the shepherd's voice and follow him, *before* asserting that the He knows his own sheep.

In Book 11, in the section preceding Lazarus' resurrection, the rendering of the Gospel displays a high degree of re-elaboration. Here Nonnus, intervening

40 As the hired shepherd's act of "leaving" is also repeated twice in John, both here and in the previous Johannine sentence: φεύγει at John 10.12 and 12.13.

more drastically, alters the order of the Gospel verses. He reverses two sections and partly merges them, as the following passage illustrates:

Par. **11.98–108**	**John 11.30–31**
λαοὶ δ', οἵ τινες ἦσαν ἔσω κινυροῖο μελάθρου καί μιν ἐλαφρίζεσκον ἀκεσσιπόνῳ τινὶ μύθῳ, πένθεος ἀγρύπνοιο παρήγοροι, ὡς ἴδον ἄφνω, ὡς Μαρίη ταχύγουνος ἀνέγρετο φοιτάδι σιγῇ, πάντες ἐφωμάρτησαν ὀπισθοπόροισι πεδίλοις, ἐλπόμενοι Μαρίην φιλοδάκρυον ὅττι θοροῦσα ἐξαπίνης ἤμελλεν ἐς ἠθάδα τύμβον ὁδεύειν, ὄφρα πάλιν κλαύσειε πολυθρήνῳ παρὰ νεκρῷ· οὔπω δ' εὐρυάλωος ἄναξ ἐπεβήσατο κώμης, ἀλλὰ μένων ἀτίνακτος ἔτι ζαθέῳ παρὰ χώρῳ εἶχε ποδὸς στατὸν ἴχνος, ὅπῃ πάρος *ἤντετο Μάρθα.*	οὔπω δὲ ἐληλύθει ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν κώμην, ἀλλ' ἦν ἔτι ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου *ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἡ Μάρθα. Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι οἱ ὄντες μετ' αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ* καὶ παραμυθούμενοι αὐτήν, ἰδόντες τὴν Μαριὰμ ὅτι ταχέως ἀνέστη καὶ ἐξῆλθεν, ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῇ, δόξαντες ὅτι ὑπάγει εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον ἵνα κλαύσῃ ἐκεῖ.
And the crowds, those who were inside the wailing chamber and were soothing her with assuaging word, consolers of her unsleeping grief, when they saw all of a sudden that Mary had risen up quick-kneed and in frenzied silence, all followed after her with trailing sandals, expecting that Mary, fond of tears, had leapt up suddenly, intending to march towards the familiar tomb, so that she might weep once more by the much-bewailed dead man. Now the Lord had not yet entered the broad village, but still remaining unmoved by the sacred place where Martha had met with Him before, He kept His footstep fixed.	Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Ll. 98–99 show the Jews in the house with Martha trying to alleviate her sorrow. They correspond to section 31 of the Gospel (in italics), while ll. 106–108, where we hear that Jesus is absent from the town at the time, correspond to John 11.30. It has been already argued that Nonnus' order makes the narrative more coherent.[41] Since the next section of the Gospel describes how Mary

41 See Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 69.

went where Christ was (ἡ οὖν Μαριὰμ ὡς ἦλθεν ὅπου ἦν Ἰησοῦς ἰδοῦσα αὐτόν, etc., John 11.32), the narration becomes clearer, if it first shows Martha's house and the people gathered there, before showing Mary, followed by the people, going out to meet Christ and then finally telling us where Christ was.

In the last Book of the *Paraphrase*, in the context of the description of Jesus' miracle on the sea of Tiberias after the Resurrection, the paraphrase again slightly modifies the order of the Gospel verses. Jesus has just asked the disciples to draw the net, which is miraculously full of fish. Then Nonnus depicts the disciples' astonishment:

***Par.* 21.69–76**	**John 21.12–13**
οὐ τότε τολμήσας τις ἀνὴρ ὁμόφοιτος ἑταίρων ἀντωποῖς βλεφάροισι θεὸν παρεόντα δοκεύων, "τίς τελέθεις", ἐρέεινε, καὶ οὐ θρασὺς εἴρετο Σίμων ἐγγύθι γινώσκων, ὅτι κοίρανος ἦεν Ἰησοῦς· καί σφιν ἄναξ παρέθηκε φέρων περιμήκετον ἰχθύν, ἰχθὺν καὶ νέον ἄρτον. Ἑοῖς δ' ἐκέλευε μαθηταῖς· "*δεῦτε, πάλιν δαίνυσθε* μιῆς ὑπὸ κύκλα τραπέζης ὀπταλέην ἀδόκητον ἐθήμονα δαῖτα θαλάσσης".	Λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, *Δεῦτε ἀριστήσατε. Οὐδεὶς δὲ ἐτόλμα* τῶν μαθητῶν ἐξετάσαι αὐτόν, Σὺ τίς εἶ; εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κύριός ἐστιν. Ἔρχεται Ἰησοῦς καὶ λαμβάνει τὸν ἄρτον καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὸ ὀψάριον ὁμοίως.
No man among the companions traveling together dared then, looking with his eyes upon the present God face to face, to ask "Who are you?" Even bold Simon did not ask, because he perceived that the Lord Jesus was near. And the Lord brought and gave them a large fish to eat, fish and fresh bread. And He ordered His disciples: "Come, share the circle of the same table, and feast once more on the roasted meal of the sea, customary and yet unexpected".	Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast". Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.

The Johannine phrase δεῦτε ἀριστήσατε corresponds to l. 75, whereas οὐδεὶς δὲ ἐτόλμα corresponds to l. 69, οὐ τότε τολμήσας τις ἀνήρ. In the re-elaboration of verse 13 the poet has inserted an element belonging to the previous Gospel verse. As usual, the transposition is combined with a Nonnian addition. This is quite striking here, as the poet has taken the liberty of creating a Simon Peter struck dumb, an image absent from the Johannine text. The poet chooses to describe the disciples' timidity and hesitation as the immediate reaction to the

miracle they have just witnessed, rather than a response to Jesus' invitation to a meal, thus stressing the miracle's effect even more emphatically.

The examples examined above demonstrate how Nonnus can occasionally be unfaithful to the strict order of the original. He feels free to alter the sequence in which John presents his material, so as to offer a more convincing picture of the events he is describing and to make his narration smoother, or, as is shown in the last example (from Book 21), to lay emphasis on a particular element of the scene.

CHAPTER IV

Amplificatio

In Nonnus' work, the chief procedure employed for the elaboration of the model is the technique of *amplificatio*, namely the quantitative expansion of the *Vorlage* by means of the accumulation of adjectives or synonyms,[1] variety of lexicon, insertion of rhetorical figures and use of *periphrasis*. The practice of αὔξησις[2] was a method traditionally applied in Classical rhetoric: Isocrates at the beginning of his *Panegyricus* (§ 8) refers to it and to its opposite, ταπείνωσις, as two different techniques that enable the orator to treat the same topic in different ways. In this context, the definition refers to the sophistic skill of presenting as great what is small and vice versa. At the same time, the term is employed with different meanings in a number of passages of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, where, in general, it is considered as a fundamental tool of persuasion.[3] According to Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1391b–1392a), both the process of amplifying and of diminishing are normally employed by orators when they wish to persuade or dissuade. Nevertheless, the most common and effective strategy employed in order to convince is αὔξησις, amplification, which especially suits the epideictic genre, as it endows it with μέγεθος (greatness) and κάλλος (beauty; *Rhet.* 1368a, 26–29). In accord with this principle, in the most influential textbooks of rhetoric such as Theon's and Hermogenes' *Progymnasmata*, amplification is defined as a *topos* the purpose of which is to elaborate on something that has been already agreed on.[4] However, it is only in Cicero that it is explicitly stated that *amplificatio*, besides being an effective rhetorical instrument which persuades by provoking emotions, also has

1 Roberts (1985, p. 149) mentions that Quintilian states that in his day some speakers even memorised lists of synonyms. The passage cited by Roberts (10.1,7) refers to the common practice of learning synonyms in order to avoid repetitions, although after having mentioned this exercise, Quintilian points out that he disapproves of it.

2 On the term αὔξησις, see Ernesti (1983), p. 48, Anderson (2000), pp. 26–29. On the rhetorical principle of *amplificatio* see also Curtius (1953), p. 492, where it is clarified the difference between *amplificatio* as elevation, belonging to a "vertical" dimension, and *amplificatio* as expansion, which is developed in a "linear" dimension and is defined as a technique of "unrolling a theme".

3 See Calboli Montefusco (2004), especially pp. 70–71.

4 Theon defines the orator's task as follows: "to demonstrate what is uncertain and to amplify what is established": 1, p. 8 Patillon-Bolognesi (65.2–4) ὅτι τοῦ ῥήτορος ἔργον ἐστὶ τό τε ἀποδεῖξαι τὰ ἀμφισβητούμενα καὶ τὸ αὐξῆσαι τὰ ἀποδεδειγμένα. Also, cf. Ps.-Hermogenes *Prog.* 11.6 Patillon (p. 205), where the *topos* consists in the amplification of something that is already agreed on.

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the stylistic function of embellishing the speech.[5] Quintilian, too, refers to this technique by stating that paraphrase itself consists in the skill "to expand what is naturally compressed, to amplify what is small, to lend variety to sameness, charm to the commonplace, and to say a quantity of good things about a very limited number of subjects", as we have seen above, in the introductory chapters.[6]

As mentioned earlier (see above, *1. Introduction*), in Nonnus' *Paraphrase*, contrary to what we read in the first of the two prologues of the *Dionysiaca*, where the aesthetics of *poikilia* are theorised (*Dion.* 1.1–44) and in the second, where the role of the poet within the epic tradition is elucidated (*Dion.* 25.1–30), there are no programmatic statements concerning the author's poetics or regarding the aim of his work. This is logical, since the *Paraphrase*, which follows a given text closely, is therefore not a totally independent poetic creation. However, frequent resort to the technique of *amplificatio*, which enables the poet to elaborate on the Gospel, involves an enormous variety in terms of poetic inventions as well as in terms of the different rhetorical techniques employed, which is very much in tune with the poetics of *poikilia* as theorised upon in the *Dionysiaca*.

Different techniques of amplification are often combined in the process of the poetic enlargement of the model. In the following sections, a number of examples from selected passages will illustrate the diverse ways in which Nonnus treats his *Vorlage* in terms of autonomous additions, stylistic and rhetorical choices and exegetic insertions. The expansion of the original may lie in the development of words and phrases by means of *periphrases* and accumulation of adjectives, in what may be seen as the simpler cases. Expansion through linguistic clarifications that explain the Gospel's foreign terms and realise the poet's "philological" touch are more subtle and significant.

Linguistic developments employing *periphrasis* and explanation are occasionally based on historical, ethnological and religious material. The amplification becomes richer and attains more sophisticated poetic levels when it results in the formation of images. These can either convey important religious information or contribute to creating a setting. The free description of settings, which is also, to a certain extent, independent from John, endows the narrative with a theatrical dimension or emphasises and embellishes the existing Johan-

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5 See Calboli Montefusco (2004), p. 74, quoting *De Or.* 3.104: "The highest excellence of eloquence—says Crassus in *De Oratore*—is indeed *amplificare rem ornando*".

6 Quint. 10.5,11 (tr. Butler 1922). See further *1. Introduction, D. The Paraphrase*, and *The Rhetorical Background to the Paraphrase in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Treatises, B. Ancient Rhetorical Treatises and Paraphrastic Technique, 2. Main Issues.*

nine one. The change from direct to indirect speech and vice-versa is one more technique pertaining to Nonnus' construction of a theatrical perspective for John's episodes.

Another highly erudite mode of *amplificatio* involves the presentation of characters by means of their language and deeds, which combines the ancient technique of *ethopoea* once more with the creation of a theatrical effect. Nonnus' additions and elaborations on the persons' thoughts, feelings, words and acts are, of course, further informed by Christian sources. Lastly, the most important aspect of *amplificatio* for a Christian poem, and for the Gospel's paraphrase in particular, is *interpretatio*, the religious exegesis *per se*.

We will now look at representative Nonnian passages. Extended Nonnian verses develop John's bare statements in the light of various Christian sources, so as to stress crucial doctrinal principles and combat heresy in multiple ways. In the passages selected to illustrate each of the aforementioned techniques, especially those concerning imagery and religious exegesis, more than one mode of expansion may coexist. For instance, passages with additions which convey significant theological ideas, examined as examples of *Interpretatio*, may also display artful and impressive imagery. However, the passages are categorised according to the feature which prevails in them, although this does not mean that it is assumed that this feature (be it theatricality, effect of sound, Christian exegesis, or else) is their only one.

A Periphrasis

Within the paraphrastic process, *periphrasis* is a widely used *tropos*,[7] as it is an effective device for embellishing the original. It is defined as the figure in which the meaning of one word is conveyed by more words. For instance, Poseidon can be called "Poseidon's might", etc.[8]

In ancient textbooks of rhetoric it is mentioned as a figure of speech pertaining to the technique of αὔξησις,[9] or as one of the techniques through

7 Lausberg (1998), especially § 540, pp. 243–244, and §§ 589–598, pp. 269–271; Ernesti (1983), p. 262.

8 Περίφρασις δέ, ὅταν τὸ διὰ μιᾶς λέξεως ῥηθῆναι δυνάμενον διὰ πλειόνων ἐκφέρηται, ὅταν βίη Ἡρακληείη δηλονότι ἡ Ἡρακλέους ἰσχύς, καὶ μένος Ἀλκινόοιο, ἤγουν ἡ τοῦ Ἀλκινόοιο προθυμία, καὶ Θηβαίων ἄνοια, ἤγουν οἱ ἄγνωστοι Θηβαῖοι (Rhet. An. 3.187,29–33 Spengel). Also, cf. Tryphon Gramm. 3.197,4–8 Spengel: περίφρασίς ἐστι φράσις πλείοσι λέξεσι παριστάνουσα μετ' αὐξήσεως τὸ ὑποκείμενον πρᾶγμα, οἷον Ποσειδάωνος σθένος, ἀντὶ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος, καὶ βίη Ἡρακληείη, καὶ Πριάμοιο βίη, καὶ μένος Ἀτρείδαο, καὶ ἲς Τηλεμάχοιο, καὶ Πατροκλῆος λάσιον κῆρ.

9 Anderson (2000), p. 102.

which πλεονασμός, the Greek equivalent of *adjectio*, parallel to amplification, is realised.[10] Longinus (*De Subl.* 28.1) regards it as an ornamental figure which produces sublimity (ὑψηλοποιόν) and contributes to harmony (εἰς κόσμον), provided it is not used in a pleonastic way (*De Subl.* 29.1). Quintilian makes a similar distinction between *periphrasis*, which is functional to a stylistic improvement, and *perissologia*, which represents its aberration.[11] The figure of *periphrasis* was also included among the *modi amplificationis* in medieval rhetorical tradition.[12] In the poetic reworking of the Gospel by Nonnus, this particular figure of speech is sporadically exploited: on a number of occasions Nonnus uses a variety of *periphrases* that serve different purposes. They may suit certain metrical schemes, they may add a significant meaning to the narration, they may have a purely ornamental or euphemistic function or they may reveal a specific interest on the poet's part in an object or an idea. This section will examine selected instances of *periphrasis* that exemplify both simple / decorative and more substantial uses of the figure, in which religious exegesis or erudite enquiry (τὸ ἱστορικόν)[13] is further involved.

Simple and rather ornamental *periphrases* rephrase terms which offer information related to practicalities. In the context of the episode of Lazarus' resurrection, Nonnus uses the *periphrasis* to describe the distance of Bethany from Jerusalem: *Par.* 11.64 corresponds to John 11.18, where the distance is expressed simply: ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίων δεκαπέντε. In the paraphrased text, Nonnus opts for a more complex solution transforming this straightforward number into ὡς τρισσῶν σταδίων καὶ δώδεκα. Elsewhere, in the episode of the expulsion of the moneychangers from the Temple, Nonnus twice inserts the same short periphrastic phrasing to describe the sheep. Here, once more the epic term μῆλα transfers the narrative to a purely poetic sphere.

Par. 2.73 εὐκεράους βόας εὗρε καὶ εἰροπόκων στίχα μήλων (*he found well-horned cattle and flocks of woolly sheep*), corresponding to John 2.14: καὶ εὗρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ

10 Phoebammon 3.1.3,23–25 Spengel.

11 Quint. *Int. Or.* 8.6,61 *quidquid enim significari brevius potest et cum ornatu latius ostenditur periphrasis est*; (…) *Verum hoc ut cum decorem habet periphrasis, ita cum in vitium incidit perissologia dicitur: obstat enim quidquid non adiuvat* (*for whatever may have been expressed with greater brevity, but is expanded for purposes of ornament, is a periphrasis* […] *But it is only called periphrasis so long as it produces a decorative effect: when it passes into excess, it is known as perissology: for whatever is not a help, is a positive hindrance*; tr. Butler 1921).

12 Roberts (1985), p. 156. See also Curtius (1953), p. 277: "the medieval Arts of poetry make periphrase a division of the theory of *amplificatio* (artistic inflation of diction)".

13 For this philological method, see above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*, final paragraphs.

τοὺς πωλοῦντας βόας καὶ **πρόβατα** (*in the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons*).

Par. 2.79 καὶ βοέην ἀγέλην ἐξήλασε καὶ **στίχα μήλων** (*and drove out the herd of cattle and the flock of sheep*), corresponding to John 2.15: πάντας ἐξέβαλεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, τά τε **πρόβατα** καὶ τοὺς βόας (*he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen*).

Notably, *periphrasis* occurs in both lines in the same *sedes*, at the end of the hexameter, this being a typical feature of Nonnus' poetic technique. Identical segments occurring at the beginning or at the end of the hexameter in a formulaic way, so to speak, are frequent in Nonnus.[14]

At *Par*. 7.33–34, in the account of the feast of the Tabernacles, ἡμετέρου γάρ / οὔπω μοι τετέλεστο χρόνου δρόμος (*for the course of my time has not yet been completed*) corresponds to the Gospel verse (John 7.8) ὅτι ὁ ἐμὸς καιρὸς οὔπω πεπλήρωται (*for my time has not yet fully come*). Here we have a *periphrasis* consisting of a metaphor that renders ὁ ἐμὸς καιρός, combined with *hyperbaton*. Both Nonnus' metaphorical expression and the phrasing of the original carry an euphemistic implication, as explicit reference to death is avoided. However, Nonnus' choice of τετέλεσται to replace πεπλήρωται is far from random, as it directly echoes the characteristic verb used by John to describe Jesus' death, which Jesus also uses: John 19.28 εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται (*Jesus, knowing that all was now finished*), 19.30 εἶπεν· τετέλεσται (*he said, "It is finished"*).

There are several similarly concise *periphrases*, sometimes bearing significant overtones, which expand upon and so elaborate and enhance the meaning of the original. For instance, the repeated Johannine ἀνέβλεψα / -εν (9.11, 9.15, 9.18) in the episode of the healing of the man born blind is changed to ἐξαπίνης φάος εἶδον (*I suddenly saw the light, Par*. 9.65), βλεφάρων λάχε φέγγος (*he obtained the light of his eyelids*, 9.74), ἐδέξατο φέγγος ὀπωπῆς (*received the light of his eyes*, 9.91). Βλέπω / -ει (John 9.19, 9.21) is changed accordingly (*Par*. 9.97 ἐδέξατο φέγγος ὀπωπῆς, *receive the late-fulfilled light of his eyes*, 9.100 ἔλλαχεν ὄμματος αἴγλην, *acquired the radiance of his eyes*).[15] In this way, the poet explicitly refers to the eyes with various synonyms (βλέφαρα, ὀπωπή, ὄμματα) and introduces the idea of light / brightness (φάος, φέγγος, αἴγλη), which ornaments the narrative, while repeatedly alluding, at the same time, to the mental sight and light acquired through Christ's restorative intervention in human life.

14 On the hexameter in Christian Greek poets, see Agosti and Gonnelli (1995), pp. 289–409; on Nonnus, especially pp. 370 ff.

15 For light / sight as designating self-recognition in the Nonnian reworking of this episode, see Johnson (2016).

The heavenly light brought by Jesus into the darkness of the material world is a typical motif in Christian iterature and in the *Paraphrase* itself.[16] In *Par.* 15.103 and 17.42 the Johannine λόγος and γραφή (which must πληρωθῇ, 15.25, 17.12) are changed to νόμου γραφικοῖο … ὀμφή and λόγος respectively. Thus, the inevitability of the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies is emphatically stressed, since they are presented as "written laws", with the implication that their reversal is impossible.

At *Par.* 3.124, the simple Johannine φυλακήν into which John the Baptist was not yet βεβλημένος (John 3.24) is transformed to ἀειφρούρητον … πομπὸν ὀλέθρου. This phrase visually animates John's bare statement, since the adjective allows the reader to picture vividly the conditions in John's prison. The phrase also adds tension to the narration, as it anticipates the end of John's sojourn in the prison, in that it describes the place itself as a "vestibule to death".

An interesting example of *periphrasis* is to be found in the episode of the healing of the blind man, *Par.* 9.26: λυσίπονον, πάλλευκον ἀπέπτυεν ἀφρὸν ὀδόντων corresponds to the Gospel's ἔπτυσεν χαμαί (John 9.6). The *periphrasis* "froth of his teeth" for πτύσμα, modelled on epic expressions,[17] is enriched by the accumulation of the two poetic adjectives attributed to it. One of them, λυσίπονος, is "proleptic" from the point of view of narratology.[18] The adjective is frequently used in connection with the ability of wine or drunkenness to alleviate human sorrows[19] and is related to *Lyaeus*, one of Dionysus' epithets. The function of this *periphrasis* seems to be euphemistic, as it allows the poet not to mention the term "spittle" (πτύσμα) which would be repeating the crude form of the original. At the same time, however, it also suggests the idea of *Christus Medicus* and the parallel between the figures of Christ and Dionysus and in particular their capacity for *healing* mankind, vigorously stressed by the adjective λυσίπονος.[20]

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16 See further De Stefani (2002), pp. 116–117, on *Par.* 1.11 and 13, Caprara (2005), pp. 190–192, on *Par.* 4.61, Johnson (2016), *passim*, esp. p. 274 (discussion of *Par.* 9.28 φαεσφόρον).

17 Hom. *Il.* 20.168–169 περί τ' ἀφρὸς ὀδόντας / γίγνεται, Ap. Rh. 3.1353 ἀμφὶ δὲ πολλός / ἀφρὸς ἀπὸ στόματος χαμάδις ῥέε χωομένοιο. Ἀφρὸς ὀδόντων also in the *Dionysiaca* (4.382, 18.245, 25.511, 45.284).

18 Because Christ's saliva has not yet restored but *will* restore the sight of the blind man. See Giraudet (2012), § 32.

19 For instance, *Dion.* 17.82, 25.283 and 47.42 λυσιπόνοιο μέθης; 25.369, 47.93 λυσίπονον καὶ ξεῖνον ἄγεις ποτόν.

20 For the figures of Dionysus and Christ in regard to their cosmological role in Nonnian poetry and thought, see Johnson (2016), pp. 269–270. For the "assimilation" of Dionysus to Christ in Nonnus, see also Cameron (2000), pp. 180–181. However, as a literary figure, Dionysus is frequently dealt with in a humorous way, whereas Christian doctrine is treated respectfully by Nonnus and Christ's actions are endowed with a spirituality that

Book 10 offers an example of *periphrasis* in the context of the passage describing the Jews as they are about to stone Christ: 10.115 εἰς ἐμὲ λαϊνέοισιν ἐθωρήχθητε βελέμνοις; (*have you armed yourselves against me with stony darts?*) corresponding to John 10.32 διὰ ποῖον αὐτῶν ἔργον ἐμὲ λιθάζετε; In this case, too, the *periphrasis* ("stony darts" for "stones"), consists of a metaphorical expression, and the image is reinforced by the use of the metaphorical verb ἐθωρήχθητε, implying war and introducing the idea of the Jews arming themselves against Jesus (εἰς ἐμέ). The same *periphrasis*, in *hyperbaton*, concerning the stones and the danger represented by the Jews, is used again in Book 11, in the passage introducing the episode of the resurrection of Lazarus. At 11.29, λαϊνέοις μάστευον οἰστεύειν σε βελέμνοις[21] renders 11.8 Ῥαββί, νῦν ἐζήτουν σε λιθάσαι. Since in both cases the verb refers to the Lord, the metaphorical expression, apart from the aesthetic effect produced by the image, might also have a slightly euphemistic purpose. Βέλεμνα, θωρήσσομαι and οἰστεύω belong to the realm of epic vocabulary of war, and, while elevating the style of the narrative to an overtly heroic register, they also introduce the idea of a strong and explicit conflict between two camps, that of the old Jewish world and its prejudices and that of the new divine message, inevitably incompatible with and incomprehensible to most of those who make up its human environment to the point that the new message provokes violent hostility.[22]

The two final examples of *periphrasis* demonstrate the ekphrastic opulence with which this rhetorical figure can be combined and also the incorporation of religious or philological interpretation in it. Book 5 opens with the description of the Temple, which employs a short phrase defined by Agosti as a "perifrasi antonomastica":[23] Ἰησοῦς δ᾽ ἀνέβαινεν ὅπῃ δόμος αἰθέρι γείτων / χιονέην

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their pagan equivalents lack. See Liebeschuetz (1995), pp. 296–207, Spanoudakis (2016), p. 609. Liebeschuetz argues that there is still space for some joking as regards the treatment of Christian ideas, too. See also below, *E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 3. The Resurrection of Lazarus*, discussion of *Par.* 11.157–180, with the relevant note on the parallels between Dionysus and Christ. For Christ as the healer *par excellence*, see Dörnemann (2013). For Christus Medicus in the present passage, see also Serra (1997), pp. 116–117, with n. 70, on λυσίπονον. See also below, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 1. The Raised Serpent, The (healing) Saviour, Eternity*. Apart from the spiritual healing offered by the Christian religion, the importance of hospitals for medical care of the people was also central in the thought of Fathers such as Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. See Dörnemann (2013), p. 121.

21 For οἰστεύειν βελέμνοις in Nonnus (in various grammatical forms), see Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 176, on *Par.* 11.29c.

22 See also below, on *F. Handling of Speech (Direct / Indirect / Dialogue), 3. Amplificatio in Dialogue*.

23 See Agosti (2003), p. 38, where it is argued that Nonnus used the Homeric description

ἀμάρυσσε λίθων ἑτερόχροον αἴγλην (*Jesus ascended where the temple, neighbour of the aether, / was sparkling with the versicolor glow of the columns' stones, Par.* 5.1) which renders καὶ ἀνέβη Ἰησοῦς εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα (John 5.1), as "the Temple" alludes to Jerusalem *par excellence*. The Temple is again mentioned with a *periphrasis* later on. At *Par.* 5.47 καί μιν ἰδὼν στείχοντα λιθώδεος ἔνδοθι νηοῦ renders John's μετὰ ταῦτα εὑρίσκει αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ (John 5.14): ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ is transformed to λιθώδεος ἔνδοθι νηοῦ, a phrase that changes the simple Johannine noun to a (synonym) noun + adjective phrase which evokes the temple more vividly, stressing its material / decorative aspect ("made from stones"). The λιθώδης νηός here is comparable to other references to the Temple which are additions to the Johannine account (*Par.* 2.85 λιθωδέος ἔκτοθι νηοῦ, 5.35 εὐλάιγγι δὲ νηῷ, 7.141 λιθωδέος ἐγγύθι νηοῦ). The insistence with which synonymic adjectives that describe the stones from which the Temple was made and the quality of its construction are used goes beyond formular convention and reveals the poet's taste for the description of edifices. The first instance of *periphrasis* in Book 5 clearly demonstrates Nonnus' taste for ekphrastic accounts of buildings. Here the phrase "where the House is a neighbour to the sky" forms a locative complement that replaces the city itself. This tendency reaches a notably high point right next in Book 5 in the impressive *periphrasis* of the Johannine phrase πέντε στοὰς ἔχουσα (5.2): πέντε παντυπλεύρῃσιν ὑπ' αἰθούσῃσι μελάθρου / δαιδαλέων ζωσθεῖσα λίθων ὑψάντυγι μίτρῃ (*under the five, long-sided porticoes of the edifice, / girded with the high-arched headband of well-wrought stones, Par.* 5.4–5), which offers an elaborate description of the stone construction of the arches.[24] It has been suggested that this description echoes Nonnus' contemporary reality, as it actually represents the view that the fifth century pilgrims saw from below as they were going up towards Jerusalem.[25] Otherwise, the Temple is described throughout the poem in *periphrases* which stress its holiness,[26] sweet scent[27] or beauty.[28] As regards the Nonnian δόμος of *Par.* 5.1, the Temple which is "neighbour of the aether", it has been also argued that it has a further, deeper significance, moving beyond the sphere of pure decoration, as

of Menelaus' palace (*Od.* 4.42–48) as well as the Synoptic Gospels (Mat. 5.14) as literary models for this specific passage.

24 On the Nonnian description of buildings, see Agosti (1998).

25 Rotondo (2017a), p. 187.

26 *Par.* 2.72 θεοκλήτῳ ἐνὶ νηῷ ~ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, John 2.14, *Par.* 2.87 δόμον ἁγνόν ... τοκῆος ~ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου, John 2.16, *Par.* 10.82 δι' ἱεροῖο ... νηοῦ ~ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, John 10.23, *Par.* 18.98 θεοκλήτῳ τ' ἐνὶ νηῷ ~ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, John 18.20.

27 *Par.* 2.80 νόσφι δόμου θυόεντος ~ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, John 2.15, *Par.* 11.228 θυωδέος ἔνδοθι νηοῦ ~ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, John 11.56.

28 *Par.* 7.104 ἐν ἀργυροφεγγέι νηῷ ~ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, John 7.28.

it points towards the new Jerusalem and designates Christ's own body, which will be destroyed and rebuilt, as Jesus has foretold in John 2.19–22.[29]

An impressive explanatory rephrasing, particularly rich and extended so as to form an extreme example of *periphrasis*, is the rendering of ἀλόη of John 19.39, which Nicodemus brings to anoint the dead Christ, with the phrase Ἐρυθραίοιο δὲ κόλπου / Ἰνδῴης ἀλόην δονακοτρεφὲς ἔρνος ἀρούρης (*and aloe from the Erythraean gulf / aloe, the sprout of the Indian land, nurtured among the reeds*, *Par.* 19.206–207). Here the poet offers some encyclopaedic information about aloe, a plant frequently mentioned in medical writers, which flourishes in warm Asiatic climates. India is the producer and exporter *par excellence* of aloe.[30] Marcellus' emendation of the manuscripts' κήπου to κόλπου,[31] supported by *Dion.* 6.215–216 Ἐρυθραίοιο δὲ κόλπου / ἔμπυρα κυμαίνοντος, can be retained on the grounds of geography. Although ancient authors did not always refer to the same sea when employing the term Ἐρυθρὰ Θάλασσα, in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (first century A.D.) "Red Sea" is used to describe today's Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean,[32] and, for all his vagueness in the use of the term ἐρυθραῖος (see also below, end of par.), Nonnus seems to have in mind a body of water (and its neighbouring coasts) not far from these.[33] With the noun κόλπου, then, the poet may be referring to the Red Sea, which is often regarded as a "gulf", due to its shape.[34] In terming the aloe "a shoot of India", although it is brought from the area around the "Red Sea", Nonnus may be implying that the myrrh that Nicodemus brought came from a plant cultivated in a coastal area of neighbouring Arabia, although its

29 For the rendering of John 2.22 ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι τοῦτο ἔλεγεν (*his disciples remembered that he had said this*), Nonnus says τότε μῦθον ἀνεμνήσαντο μαθηταί / ὅττι δόμον δέμας εἶπε (*only then did the disciples remember / that He called His body a house*, *Par.* 2.107–108), adding an emphatic etymological word play with δέμας and δόμος. See further Rotondo (2017a), pp. 181–183.

30 Cf., for instance, Orib. *Coll. Med.* 11 A 32,6 Raeder γεννᾶται δ' ἐν Ἰνδίᾳ πλείστη, ἐξ ἧς καὶ τὸ πίεσμα κομίζεται.

31 (1861), pp. 280 and 349 (adopted by Scheindler but not by Accorinti 1987). Marcellus also corrected the manuscripts' ἀλόης to ἀλόην.

32 See Casson (1989), p. 94. For the date of the work, see id. p. 7.

33 Regarding *Dion.* 20.352–356 (esp. 20.353 Ἐρυθραίης … θαλάσσης), Chuvin (1991, p. 255, n. 1) observes "c' est la mer Érythrée, qui s' étend bien au-delà de notre mer Rouge". For the Red Sea at *Dion.* 6.215, see also Chuvin (P. Chuvin, *Nonnos De Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, vol. 3: *Chants VI–VIII*, Paris 1992), ad loc. (p. 156).

34 Cf. Arrian *Alex. An.* 7.16,2–3 τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν δὴ καλουμένην θάλασσαν, κόλπον οὖσαν τῆς μεγάλης θαλάσσης, Dion. Per. 54 ἄλλος δ' Ἀραβικὸς κυμαίνεται ἔνδοθι κόλπος. Smaller gulfs within it are, for instance, the two gulfs of the Red Sea located at the end of Egypt (cf. *Peri. mar. Erythr.* 1.1).

ultimate origin was Indian. In fact, we know, for instance, that Κανή, a town and port of Arabia on the Indian Ocean, located by archaeologists in the area of the cape of Husn al Ghurab in southern Yemen, at the Gulf of Aden,[35] is reported to have exported aloe to Egypt (*Per. mar. Erythr.* 28). If we accept the reading κήπου, on the other hand, then we have to interpret "Erythraean" as "Indian" (since a "garden of / near the Red Sea" would not be compatible wth the "Indian land" here), which is not unparalleled in Nonnus. Ἐρυθραίοιο ... κήπου would be a rephrasing / repetition of Ἰνδῴης ἀρούρης and the whole tautological sentence would stress the Indian origin of the aloe, without referring to any trading post. It has to be noted that "Erythraean garden" does recur in Nonnus, although it probably refers to a different area, neither near the Red Sea nor in India.[36]

The poet furthermore refers to the physical quality of the plant, attributing to it the adjective δονακοτραφές, which probably suggests its rough, thorny nature.[37] Thus the technique of *periphrasis* is mixed here with that of *historical* enquiry on the part of the poet, who exhibits his erudition as regards *realia*, geographical and scientific, in a broader sense (τὸ ἱστορικόν).[38] Moreover, with the insertion of this piece of information at this point, the poet adds an ornamental detail which offers some relaxation amidst the grim atmosphere following the Crucifixion. At the same time, Nonnus stresses how expensive the myrrh is and how redolent of luxury its use is, which actually suggests Nicodemus' devotion to Jesus and his consequent generosity in honouring the Master, as [Epiphanius] also notes, in his comment on this passage (*Hom. in div.*

35 See Casson (1989), p. 161.

36 For "Erythraean" as standing for "Indian" often in Nonnus (the Indian Ocean described as "Erythraean"), see Tissoni (1998), p. 161, on *Dion.* 44.234 Ἐρυθραίων δονακήων, who further notes that "Erythraean land" is far from being accurately defined. See also Agosti (2004), pp. 683–684, on *Dion.* 37.65, and pp. 582–583, and M.C. Fayant, F. Vian, *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, vol. 19: *Index General des Noms Propres* (Paris 2006), p. 53. Accorinti (1987, p. 138) defends κήπου at *Par.* 19.206 on the basis of *Dion.* 33.4 Ἐρυθραίῳ παρὰ κήπῳ (one of the Graces gathering shoots of reeds there to help herself mix oriental oils and prepare fragrance for Aphrodite in "Paphian cauldrons"). It has been suggested that this phrase refers to Erythrae, an ancient town of Cyprus, perhaps to be identified with sixth century A.D. Paphos, chiefly with regard to Steph. Byz. Ἐρυθραί, πόλις Ἰώνων ... καὶ Κύπρου ἄλλη, ἡ νῦν Πάφος and Nonnus, *Dion.* 13.445 Ἐρυθραίην τε πολίχνην (on which see also Gonnelli 2003, ad loc., p. 112). See D. Vitas, *Νέα Πάφος-Σαλαμίνα: η Τοπογραφία και η Πολεοδομική τους Ανάπτυξη κατά την Ελληνιστική Περίοδο*, Diss. University of Cyprus (2013), p. 53.

37 Cf. its description in Orib. *Coll. Med.* 11 A 32 Raeder.

38 For this philological method / school practice (the ἱστορικόν) as used by Origen, who expands on a similar subject, i.e. kinds of pearls and their qualities, in his *Commentary on Matthew* 10.7–10 Girod, see Young (1997), pp. 86–87. See further *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*, final paragraphs.

corp. sep. PG 43.445,11 ff.). Furthermore, as has been observed, myrrh is suitable for kings, once more implying Christ's regal status, and is also a symol of death.[39]

B Synonymic Amplificatio and Verbal / Adjectival Accumulation

The most common paraphrastic procedure employed by Nonnus in amplifying the *Vorlage* is undoubtedly the synonymic accumulation of adjectives, nouns and verbs. The rhetorical figure of *anaphora* occasionally gives rise to typical constructions, in which the repetition of the meaning enhances the narrative's style and also the emphasis on the idea expressed thereby. It has to be stressed, once again, that the use of this specific technique in order to expand the model does not exclude the possibility that the poet might also adopt other paraphrastic strategies and combine them when elaborating on the same Gospel passage. *Amplificatio* does not involve only the accumulation of synonyms, as the same result may be also achieved by using more than one verb or adjective or noun with different meanings. The poet may also add phrases, either simple,[40] or more complex, which build whole new images, thereby expanding substantially and impressively upon the original. The vocabulary which amplifies the spare diction of the Gospel is chosen so as to evoke other Biblical passages, theological notions and also pagan contexts, in an intriguing mixture of diverse imagery invested throughout with epic colouring. Characteristic passages exemplify Nonnus' technique of amplification more clearly. To create amplification, in some cases the weight is laid on the theological meaning of the terms employed, and in other cases the emphasis is instead put on the representation of the vividness / elaboration of the scene described, both in visual and in acoustic terms, theology being also (depending on the importance of the event) present in the background.

B.1 *Simple Additions of Adjectives / Participles*

The additions of adjectives and participles is a frequently recurrent feature in Nonnus' reworking of the Gospel, and its use is manifest throughout the narrative.[41] It is enough here to give some representative examples, in which the

39 Accorinti (1987), ad loc.

40 Kuhn (1906, p. 131) exemplifies briefly the synonymic amplification with an instance of repetition of a sentence in variation: τί οὖν βαπτίζεις; (John 1.25) ~ καὶ τί σὺ βαπτίζεις; Πόθεν ὕδατι φῦλα καθαίρεις; (*Par.* 1.90).

41 A list of examples of *epitheta ornata* that Nonnus attributes to Christ, John the Baptist, Peter and other people is offered by Kuhn (1906), p. 131.

addition of one or more adjectives to a Johannine noun, or participle(s) to a Johannine verb, sometimes itself altered, endows the narrative with a new theological dimension, or clarifies and emphasises its meaning. The examples we choose concern the presentation of Christ, Christ's words or actions and other people's reactions to them. Through these additions, Nonnus elaborates the salvific value of Christ's activity, its importance for humanity, and the hostile environment in which this activity is developed.

At *Par.* 7.193 the προφήτης, meaning Jesus, from the Johannine sentence ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας προφήτης οὐκ ἐγείρεται (7.52), retained almost *verbatim* by Nonnus, is given the adjective ποικιλόμυθος, also attributed to Christ as an added adjective in its only other occurrence in the *Paraphrase* (3.9, ῥαββὶν ποικιλόμυθε, rendering John's plain ῥαββί at 3.2). Nonnus often uses adjectives compounded with ποικίλος.[42] This rare adjective, first appearing in Hellenistic times to describe a beloved person's lips,[43] and occasionally occurring in the *Dionysiaca* in connection with the divine,[44] introduces the notion of the diversity, meaningfulness and charm of Jesus' words. At 17.21 μύθους σοὺς παρέδωκα βιαρκέας (*I delivered your life-sustaining words*) corresponds to John 17.8 τὰ ῥήματά σου … δέδωκα, the plain ῥήματα of the Gospel transformed to βιαρκέας μύθους. The very rare adjective,[45] meaning "life-sustaining", adds to the original the idea of the beneficial effect that God's words will have on men. In the same spirit, the simple Johannine ῥήματα (12.48) are altered to βιοσσόα χεύματα φωνῆς (*the reviving, life-saving streams of my voice*, *Par.* 12.189). Likewise, the Nonnian adjective βιοσσόος,[46] derived either from σεύω (in which case it means "life-generating"), or from σῴζω, adopted flexibly in the narrative by the poet and depending on the context,[47] accompanies Christ, when no such reference is made in John, when Ἰησοῦς or Χριστός are both in the original and in the *Paraphrase*: cf. *Par.* 3.142 (~John 3.28), 11.83 (~John 11.25), 12.39 (~John 12.9). Similarly, the poetic (though not Homeric) adjective φερέσβιος, typically attrib-

42 For instance, ποικιλόδωρος (*Dion.* 18.69), ποικιλόμορφος (*Dion.* 18.257, 32.100), ποικιλόδακρυς (*Dion.* 24.192, 30.162), ποικιλόμητις (37.622). For ποικιλόνωτος, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 4. Pontius Pilate*, discussion of *Par.* 19.16–32.

43 Ποικιλόμυθος occurs first at Diosc. *AP* 5.56,1 in extant literature. For the principle of ποικιλία in the *Dionysiaca*, see *I. Introduction, C. The Dionysiaca*.

44 3.423 (Hermes), 42.362 (Dionysus' voice).

45 First in Archias *AP* 6.179,1, quoted by Suda. Then in Nonnus (*Dion.* 17.370, *Par.* 8.140, 15.53) and Paulus Silentiarius (*Descr. S. Soph.* 335, 430. 665, *Descr. Amb.* 43).

46 The adjective is a coinage of Nonnus; see, for instance, Chuvin and Fayant (2006), pp. 155–156 (on *Dion.* 41.20).

47 See Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 22, on *Par.* 11.83b.

uted to fruit-giving earth in Greek literature, is exclusively related to Christ in the *Paraphrase*, in which the motif of life derived from Christ is characteristic and recurrent.[48] At *Par.* 5.105 and 6.117 (ἀνθρώποιο φερέσβιος υἱός), it is added to the Johannine υἱὸς (τοῦ) ἀνθρώπου (5.27, 6.27), and again to the Johannine υἱός mentioned by Christ in a parabolic image: the reference is to Jesus as the "son" (*Par.* 8.92~John 8.35). In another instance, the adjective qualifies Christ's death (μόρον, *Par.* 18.132, the whole phrase here being a Nonnian addition), in a particularly striking oxymoron which encapsulates the idea of Christ's life-giving self-sacrifice.

At *Par.* 17.27, Jesus' question to God the Father, expressed with a simple περὶ αὐτῶν ἐρωτῶ in John 17.9, is rendered as αἰτίζων σε διείρομαι (*I ask and beseech you*), which stresses, in an epic tone, the Son's intense interest on behalf of mankind and His eagerness to mediate on behalf of them with the Father. At *Par.* 15.69, the κόσμος who will hate the disciples, as they hated Christ (John 15.18) is changed by Nonnus to κόσμος ἀγήνωρ, the attached adjective attributed also to the high priests (9.166) and to the Jewish crowd (listening to Christ, 6.131, about to stone Christ, 8.188). Thus, the dangerousness of people's feelings against Christ and Christ's followers is foregrounded by means of an impressive epic term bearing its negative Homeric sense ("arrogant", applied to base figures, such as Thersites and the suitors, *Il.* 2.276, *Od.* 1.106, 2.235, 16.462, *al.*), rather than its positive meaning ("manly", applied to Homeric heroes). The positive sense is in fact given to ἀγήνωρ when it qualifies Christ's word (ἀγήνορα μῦθον, 8.170).[49]

B.2 *Anaphora*

Anaphora (or *epanaphora*), one of the techniques by means of which πλεονασμός or *adjectio-amplificatio* is achieved,[50] is a stylistic feature occasionally occurring in the *Paraphrase*, while it is fairly frequent in the *Dionysiaca*.[51] The emphasis on and magnification of the person / idea for whom / which this technique is employed is outlined by [Demetrius] at *De El.* 61. Exactly because of the economy with which it is employed in the *Paraphrase*, it gives great

48 For a detailed discussion, see Agosti (2003), pp. 472–473, on *Par.* 5.105.

49 For the adjective's meanings and for its use in the *Paraphrase*, see the discussions of Savelli (1998), pp. 184–185, on *Par.* 15.69, and Franchi (2013), pp. 420–421, on *Par.* 6.131.

50 Cf. Phoebammon 3.1.3,10–11 Spengel, who further defines the figure as follows: ἐπαναφορὰ δέ ἐστιν, ἢ καὶ ἀναφορά, πλειόνων στίχων ἢ κώλων κώλων ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν ἀρχή. For πλεονασμός, see *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

51 See Schmiel (1998).

emphasis to the idea it conveys and is notable, in terms of form, for the rhythmical effect with which it endows the verse. In this present section the *anaphorae* of the poem will be comprehensively examined (not including simpler repetitions, such as πῇ πέλε, πῇ πέλε κεῖνος, *Par.* 9.67, and the like). It will emerge that Nonnus' *anaphorae* typically highlight crucial theological notions or important information regarding Christ's position and interaction with people: the superior knowledge and the power over nature and over life and death that Christ-Logos possesses, the close and affectionate relationship between Christ and His disciples, Christ's dissociation from the world, the place of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, the terribleness of Judas' act, the impiety of the Jews.

Anaphoric repetition of whole hemistichs in the first part of the verse is typical of the *Paraphrase*. These repetitions duplicate the notion they express, while, as is to be expected, John usually states the idea only once. They thus stress the notion strongly. We have already discussed the repetition of *Par.* 15.8–9 (μίμνετε συμπεφυῶτες ἐμῷ παλιναυξέι θάμνῳ, / μίμνετε συμπεφυῶτες ἐμοί, βλαστήματα κόσμου) and its significance for the idea of the bond between Christ and disciples.[52] The *anaphora* of the first hemistich of *Par.* 15.55–56: is similar δοῦλος ἀνὴρ οὐκ οἶδε, τί κοίρανος ἔργον ὑφαίνει, / δοῦλος ἀνὴρ οὐκ οἶδεν (*a slave man does not know what deed the lord weaves, / a slave man does not know*), rendering John 15.15 ὁ δοῦλος οὐκ οἶδεν τί ποιεῖ αὐτοῦ ὁ κύριος (*the servant does not know what his master is doing*). Following the same structural pattern of the *anaphora* of *Par.* 15.8–9, this *anaphora* also graphically sketches the closeness between Christ and His disciples. Here Nonnus repeats the statement that a slave ignores his master's deeds, so as to underline the difference between this situation and the knowledge shared between Christ and disciples, that Christ asserts, which proves that the disciples are friends, rather than servants. Thus, Nonnus' *anaphora* highlights the central Johannine idea of mutual love between Christ and the disciples.[53]

Now, in *Par.* 18.32–34, Judas' betrayal is described: the phrase ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτόν of John's 18.5 εἱστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῶν is transformed to the expanded relative clause ὅς μιν ἀφαυροτάτοιο μινυνθαδίου χάριν ὄλβου / υἷα θεοῦ παρέδωκεν ἀτέρμονος ἐλπίδα κόσμου, / υἷα θεοῦ παρέδωκε (*who for the sake of a worthless and ephemeral deal / handed over the Son of God, the hope of the boundless world—/ the Son of God he handed over!*). With the repeated phrase υἷα θεοῦ παρέδωκεν, again standing before the trochaic caesura

52 See above, *III. Non-amplificatory Paraphrase, B. Abbreviations and Conflations.*

53 For which see further Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 109–112.

in both lines, Nonnus emphasises the monstrosity of Judas' act, as he replaces the simple pronoun αὐτόν with "the Son of God" and makes a duplicated sentence out of the participle παραδιδούς. The second occurrence of the repeated phrase (*Par.* 18.34) ends with a verse-cutting full-stop which underscores the decisiveness and dramatic tension of the moment.

Probably the most impressive *anaphora* of the type just discussed is the case of *Par.* 8.53–54, in that it combines symmetry between the first hemistichs of two consecutive lines with a further symmetrical equivalence between their second hemistichs, too. The couplet

> ξεῖνος ἔφυν κόσμοιο καὶ οὐ βροτὸν οἶδα τοκῆα·
> ξεῖνος ἐγὼ κόσμοιο καὶ αἰθέρος εἰμὶ πολίτης
>
> [I …] was born a stranger to the world, and do not know a mortal parent; / I am a stranger to the world, and a citizen of the aether.

renders John's ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (8.23) and develops the notion of Jesus' detachment from the world. The idea is discussed below.[54] Here it is enough to note the almost absolute metrical and structural balance between the two lines and all their terms, which depicts most graphically the irregularity and unusualness of Jesus' descent and identity.

An *anaphora* may develop a notion which does not exist in the *Vorlage*, in which case the emphasis added by the figure is of particular strength. This occurs in the narration of two of Jesus' miracles and in both cases Nonnus reveals, in a statement elaborated with *anaphora*, what actually Jesus *does*. Nonnus gives us this important information while he describes the performance of the miracle and before the Evangelist tells us its visible outcome, "watching" it, as he does, together with the onlookers of the scene. The *anaphorae* which are embedded in accounts of Jesus' action added to the narration by the poet occur in the description of the healing of the man born blind and in the resurrection of Lazarus.

In *Par.* 9.30–32, consisting of verses generally corresponding to the Johannine description of Jesus spitting on the ground and anointing the man's eyes with mud (9.6 ἔπτυσεν χαμαὶ καὶ ἐποίησεν πηλὸν ἐκ τοῦ πτύσματος, καὶ ἐπέχρισεν αὐτοῦ τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς), Nonnus adds to his model an account of how Jesus actually created eyes for the man:

54 *H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, b. Jesus as Stranger to the World.*

ἀνέρος ἔπλασεν ὄμμα, τὸ μὴ φύσις εὗρεν ὀπάσσαι,
ἀνέρος ἔπλασεν ὄμμα, καὶ ἀγλήνοιο προσώπου
γράψας δίπτυχα κύκλα μέσην ἐχάραξεν ὀπωπήν, etc.

He created the man's eye, which nature was not able to grant; / He created the man's eye, and on his eyeless countenance / He painted twofold circles, and inscribed the eyeball in the middle

The repeated first hemistich emphasises the core of the miracle, anticipating its later revelation in John: Jesus *creates eyes* where they did not previously naturally exist.[55] The complementing hemistichs with the negative phrasing referring to the man's previous situation (τὸ μὴ φύσις εὗρεν ὀπάσσαι and ἀγλήνοιο) underline His control over nature, His ability to reverse nature's order and, ultimately, the power of creation which Jesus' act reveals and which clearly demonstrates the divinity of its possessor. Nonnus' emphatic ἔπλασεν actually speaks of the Son's power of creation, recalling the description of the Logos, who creates everything, at the very beginning of John's Gospel (1.3) πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν. Nonnus' account of the healing of the blind man is in any case shot through with the notion of creation and with the contrast between light and darkness which place the episode in parallel to the imagery and the theological notions of the first sentences of John's Gospel.[56]

The resurrection of Lazarus is the apex of Jesus' miracles. As he narrates this wonder, Nonnus again inserts in the narration a straightforward statement which announces what Christ actually did. In *Par.* 11.158–160

ἔξιθι, Λάζαρε, δεῦρο. Λιποφθόγγοιο δὲ νεκροῦ
ἄπνοον ἐψύχωσε δέμας νεκυοσσόος ἠχώ·
ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, κτλ.

"Step out, Lazarus, come hither". The voiceless dead man's / body, lacking breath, was given soul by the corpse-stirring echo; / He called forth a man lacking breath

the poet reproduces the famous call to Lazarus in direct speech, tells us that Jesus gave life to Lazarus' dead body and then repeats that Jesus "called" the

55 Cf. Serra (1997), p. 126, on l. 30: "La ripetizione dell'espressione serve a mettere in evidenza un concetto ben preciso: Cristo crea l'occhio del cieco, mentre il semplice 'unse' del dettato evangelico non lo spiega e lascia il dubbio sull'effettiva prassi del miracolo".

56 See Johnson (2016), p. 274.

man, in a rephrased manner (indirect speech), before we actually see Lazarus emerge from the sepulchre, according to the Johannine order (in 11.43–44 John says that Jesus calls Lazarus out and Lazarus appears from the grave, without speaking of Jesus' *giving life to Lazarus*: Λάζαρε, δεῦρο ἔξω. Ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκώς, etc.). Christ's act of calling is repeated two lines below, *Par.* 11.162 ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, with a hemistich identical to that of 11.160. For Spanoudakis, both *anaphorae* (that of *Par.* 11.160–162 ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε and that of 9.30–31) create a "triumphal" effect.[57] One may also add that the *anaphora* of *Par.* 11.159–160 (ἄπνοον ἐψύχωσε δέμας ... ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, with emphasis on the repetition of ἄπνοον + verb designating some superhuman action),[58] has the same purpose as that of the *anaphora* of *Par.* 9.30–31. It focuses on the essence of the miracle, revealing it before we learn it in an "objective" manner from the description of its result (the blind man seeing and Lazarus walking). Ἐψύχωσε corresponds to the ἔπλασεν of the previous miracle; this verb also states the overturn of the laws of nature, this time, even more impressively and outstandingly, declaring the annihilation of the finality of death, and thus makes explicit the divinity of its agent.

Similar patterns of repetition with equivalent, rather than identical, phrasing[59] of two consecutive lines up to the trochaic caesura occur elsewhere, too. *Par.* 1.214–215 οὐρανόθεν κατιόντα ... / οὐρανὸν εἰσανιόντα refers to the group of angels that Christ promises that the disciples, newly chosen, will be able to see. Nonnus expands a repetition which already exists in John, albeit in a very restricted form there (ὄψεσθε ... τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας, 1.52). At *Par.* 7.56–57, again, the question of the Johannine Jews πῶς οὗτος γράμματα οἶδεν μὴ μεμαθηκώς; (John 7.15) is rendered more dramatically with a duplication which underlines the Jews' excited curiosity: γράμματα πῶς δεδάηκεν, ἃ μὴ μάθεν, ἴδμονι τέχνῃ; / γράμματα πῶς ἀδίδακτος ἐπίσταται; (*How is it that He learnt letters, which He did not study, with erudite art? / How is it that He knows letters untaught?*) The play between γράμματα and διδ- ("to know letters"), in the first line expressed positively (δεδάηκεν) and in the second line negatively (ἀδίδακτος) stands, as always, before the trochaic caesura and stresses the paradox, in the view of people's restricted intellect, of knowledge untaught, exceeding

57 This effect is comparable to the effect that other "miracles", also expressed with *anaphorae*, create in the onlooker in the *Dionysiaca*: Dionysus' acts (31.96–97), the marvel of Beroe's beauty (42.74–75). See further Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 282.

58 For Biblical, patristic and other passages on God's voice and for the "call" of God to which man has to respond, see further Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 279–280.

59 For a similar feature in the *Dionysiaca* (i.e. a not "exact" *anaphora* or a "parallelism"), see Schmiel (1998), p. 327.

conventional human apprenticeship. We have already discussed the whole passage.[60] Now, at *Par.* 8.110–111, through Jesus' words Nonnus stresses that Abraham would never wish to kill an innocent man and was so utterly different from contemporary Jews, who seek to kill Christ: Ἀβρὰμ οὐ μενέαινεν ἀναίτιον ἄνδρα δαμάσσαι, / Ἀβρὰμ οὐ κάμε τοῦτο θεοστυγές (*Abraham did not wish to subdue a guiltless man, / Abraham did not do this God-hated deed*, rendering John's τοῦτο Ἀβραὰμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν, 8.40). Nonnus' *anaphora* and the added phrases emphasise the Jews' malice, sinfulness (θεοστυγές) and their complete dissociation from the pious men of the Old Testament.[61]

There are also a couple of less extended, but still striking *anaphorae* of single terms rather than groups of words, which are also significant as regards the idea they highlight. The anaphoric repetition of πνεῦμα at the verse opening of *Par.* 15.106 and 107 emphasises the idea of the Holy Spirit, whom the Son will send to the disciples: πνεῦμα θεοῦ νοεροῖο διορνύμενον γενετῆρος, / πνεῦμα τόπερ παρὰ πατρὸς ἐς ὑμέας αὐτὸς ἰάλλω (*the spirit of the rational God proceeding from the begetter, / the spirit which from the Father I myself shall send forth to you*, rendering John's ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος ὃν ἐγὼ πέμπω παρὰ τοῦ πατρός, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, ἐκεῖνος μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ, *when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me*, 15.26). Nonnus replaces John's first reference to the Spirit as παράκλητος with the term πνεῦμα,[62] which is thus duplicated, to create an emphatic and rhythmic *anaphora* that repeats the name (Πνεῦμα) of the third person of the Trinity, His link to the Father and His role in the world's salvation. This is one more demonstration of Nonnus' consistency in emphasising the Spirit's association to the Father.[63] In *Par.* 19.79–80, the Johannine Jews' cry οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα (*we have no king but Caesar*, 19.15) is rephrased with an *anaphora* of the Homeric term for "king": ἄλλον ἔχειν οὐκ ἴδμεν ἀήθεα κοίρανον ἡμεῖς, / κοίρανον αὐτοκέλευστον, ὃν οὐκ ἐστέψατο Ῥώμη (*we cannot have another, unaccustomed lord, /—a self-proclaimed lord, whom Rome did not crown*). With this figure Nonnus stresses the idea of kingship which the Jews reject as belonging to Christ and, consequently, highlights the magnitude of their mistake.

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60 See above, *III. Non-amplificatory Paraphrase, A. Literal Paraphrasis.*

61 For the "un-Abrahamic nature of the Jews" here, see further the comments of Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), pp. 211–212. By hating Christ, the Jews in fact hate the Father, something which places them in sharp contrast to their patriarch.

62 For the identification of the Paraclete with the Holy Spirit, see Savelli (1998), pp. 212–213.

63 Cf. πνεῦμα θεοῦ (*Par.* 1.116), πνεῦμα θεοῦ γενετῆρος (*Par.* 14.67), πνεῦμα θεοῦ ζῶντος (*Par.* 16.26).

C Explanations

Explanation (ἐπεξήγησις) of obscure terms is, according to Phoebammon, one of the techniques of which πλεονασμός, the *adjectio-amplificatio*, consists. Furthermore, explanation of words, or the γλωσσηματικόν, in the view of ancient literary critics, is in fact a method of philological exegesis, which Nonnus can employ with reference to one of the other methods, that of the clarification of the *realia*, the ἱστορικόν.[64] The poet also occasionally uses such exegesis in combination with the pure religious *interpretatio*.[65]

It has been observed that Nonnus shows a consistent tendency to insert explanations concerning foreign names or linguistic borrowings that appear in the Gospel.[66] In Greek bible poetry, apart from Nonnus, various Latin terms appear in the *Visio Dorothei* and fewer in other poems from the Bodmer collection.[67] As regards Latin New Testament epic poetry, which is more comparable than the *Visio* to Nonnus' work, as we have a transfer of Gospel diction into verse in both cases, Jewish names of persons and places are sometimes mentioned, but quite often omitted in Juvencus, due to metrical difficulties;[68] other Judaisms, however, like *osanna*, *amen*, *pascha*, *sabbata*, do appear in the poem and are rarely explained.[69] A Greek hexameter poem which contains foreign "technical" and other terms moves further away from the poetic atmosphere of archaic and Hellenistic epic tradition, as these terms enhance the "modernity" of the poem and highlight the fact that it is situated in a contemporary, unmythological, more realistic world. In the context of poetic paraphrase, Nonnus explains the foreign terms, because he is inclined anyway to didacticism, a feature intrinsic to the genre (see below, introduction to *H. Interpretatio*), because he needs to be accurate and wishes to display knowledge and, lastly, because such explanations appeal to his literary taste. In the context of Nonnus' high

64 For ἐπεξήγησις, see Phoebammon 3.1.3,38–43 Spengel. For πλεονασμός and for the employment of the γλωσσηματικόν, ἱστορικόν, etc., in religious exegesis, see above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity* (for γλωσσηματικόν, etc., final paragraphs). For Origen's explanations of words in his commentaries to the Bible, see Neuschäfer (1987), pp. 140–155. Unlike Nonnus, Origen explains Greek words (indicating, for instance, the difference between ζηλοῦν and παραζηλοῦν, or commenting on the verb φρυάσσω), probably being influenced by Stoic ideas.

65 See below, *2. Place-Names of Theological Significance*.

66 De Stefani (2002, pp. 206–207) points out that from time to time these explanations sound almost unnecessary.

67 See Kessels and Van Der Horst (1987), pp. 347, 358, Miguélez Cavero (2013a), pp. 94–95.

68 See Green (2006), pp. 106–107.

69 See Green (2006), p. 109. *Sabbata* is explained at 2.564.

stylistic register, linguistic borrowings left unexplained may be perceived as "impure" and not suitable for high stylistic standards.[70]

Nonnus does not always explain foreign words, since he occasionally employs such terms without comment. This he does with δηνάριον, which occurs twice in John (6.7 and 12.5) and in both instances it is left unchanged by the paraphrast without clarification (*Par.* 6.20 and 12.20). This is most probably due to the fact that it was a fairly common word and by the time of Nonnus it was perceived as a constituent of the Greek language. Another instance in which the foreign term is not accompanied by any explanation is *Par.* 6.10 πάσχα τόπερ καλέουσι, corresponding to John 6.2 (ἦν δὲ ἐγγὺς τὸ πάσχα, ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων).[71] Here Nonnus does not paraphrase the explanatory phrase in the Gospel.

The same occurs, too, with πάσχα in *Par.* 2.70 and 11.223 (although in the latter instance the reference to the Jews appears in the following line). In *Par.* 11.223 πάσχα is only given the further qualification πολυκλήιστον ("much renowned"), an ornamental adjective, in this case, and a Nonnian coinage.[72] Nonnus may not have wanted to elaborate on the Judaic Easter perhaps because he was aware of the contrast between the Mosaic and the Christian Easter and also aware of the principle that the former is a prefiguration of the latter.[73]

On the other hand, although usually the foreign term is retained and explained, in a couple of passages Nonnus prefers to remove the linguistic borrowing. This is the case with the Latin nouns *praetorium* (John 18.28 εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ~ *Par.* 18.131 εἰς δόμον αὐχήεντος ... ἡγεμονῆος) and *flagellum* (John 2.15 ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων ~ *Par.* 2.78 σύμπλοκον ἐκ σχοίνοιο νόθην ποίησεν ἱμάσθλην), which appear in the Gospel. Both words are rendered with *periphrases* in Greek which create more striking images, in comparison to the Johannine narrative. In such *periphrases* the foreign terms are simply translated

70 A stylistic concern of this kind is evident, for instance, in the much later (end of the tenth century) reworking of earlier hagiographical sources by Symeon Metaphrastes, who systematically inserts explanations of foreign terms in his re-elaboration, as these terms sound too unrefined to his literary taste. This is a typical feature of *metaphrasis*, in which the tendency is either to explain the linguistic borrowings or to remove them. On linguistic borrowings in Symeon, see H. Zilliacus, "Das lateinische Lehnwort in der griechschen Hagiographie", *ByzZ* 37 (1937), pp. 302–344; id. "Zur stilistischen Umarbeitungstechnik des Symeon Metaphrastes", *ByzZ* 38 (1938), pp. 333–350.

71 See Franchi (2013), pp. 291–292.

72 See further Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 345.

73 See Livrea (2000), p. 250, Greco (2004), p. 67, and Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 345.

or replaced: πραιτώριον is δόμος ἡγεμονῆος and φραγέλιον is ἱμάσθλη.[74] However, Nonnus' usual practice is to provide the reader with explanations: this applies to passages containing Hebrew or Latin terms or names, which the paraphrast normally elucidates by introducing short phrases in which he indicates from what language they derive and / or what they actually mean.[75]

A discussion of representative instances of explanatory additions to phrases containing non-Greek words will shed further light on Nonnus' technique of reshaping the Gospel's foreign terminology. In this discussion, we place Nonnian explanatory techniques in two principal categories: "simpler" rephrasings, i.e. rephrasings in which attention is drawn to the foreign quality of the term and the term is explained, but with no further deepening in its sense (obviously this only occurs with words which do not require such deepening), on the one hand, and exegetical rephrasings, which convey information that illustrates the theological importance of the term, on the other. There are two examples of the second category, in the explanations of two place-names, Golgotha and Siloam

C.1 *Various Terms*

In Book 1 Nonnus inserts a type of gloss which explains the Hebrew word *Mašíah* that appears in John 1.42. In this case the Nonnus closely follows the Johannine text, which specifies that the term Χριστός is the translation of Μεσσίας:[76] 1.158–159 Μεσσίαν σοφὸν εὕρομεν, ὅς θεὸς ἀνήρ / Χριστὸς Ἰουδαίοισιν ἀκούεται Ἑλλάδι φωνῇ.[77] However, this is one of the few instances in which a Hebrew term is classified as ἰουδαῖος, since the most common definition in Nonnian explanations of Hebrew words or names is σύρος, even when in the *Vorlage* the term is clearly described as Hebrew.[78] At *Par.* 19.91,[79] for instance, Nonnus changes the Johannine Ἑβραϊστί into the *periphrasis* Σύρων στόμα.

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74 For a discussion on the location of the *praetorium* in Jerusalem (Herodes' palace or the Antonia Fortress) and for the *periphrases* used to describe it, see Livrea (1989), pp. 173–174 and p. 187. For ἱμάσθλη, its appearance in Nonnian poetics and its literal and metaphorical connotations, see further Livrea (2000), p. 260.

75 An early concise enumeration of Nonnian "comments" on linguistic borrowings is Preller (1918), pp. 111–113.

76 John 1.42 εὑρήκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν (ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον Χριστός).

77 De Stefani (2002), p. 207, observes that the interest in etymologies, typical of Alexandrian poetry, most probably influenced this kind of linguistic explanations: for instance, Call. fr. 11.5–6 ἄστυρον ἐκτίσσαντο, τό κεν "Φυγάδων" τις ἐνίσποι / Γραικός, ἀτὰρ κείνων γλῶσσ' ὀνόμηνε "Πόλας", Mel. *AP* 7.419,7–8 ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν Σύρος ἐσσί, "Σαλάμ", εἰ δ' οὖν σύ γε Φοῖνιξ, / "Αὐδονίς", εἰ δ' Ἕλλην, "Χαῖρε", τὸ δ' αὐτὸ φράσον.

78 For instance, Ἑβραϊστί in John 19.13, 19.17, 19.20, 20.17.

79 Discussed below, *2. Place-Names of Theological Significance*.

In the following passage Nonnus explains that the noun σουδάριον comes from a foreign language: in this case he again seems to consider the Hebrew and the Syriac languages as equivalent,[80] showing, once again, his idiosyncratic attitude towards foreign languages and towards the Jewish language, in particular:[81]

Par. **20.30**	**John 20.7**
σουδάριον τόπερ εἶπε Σύρων ἐπιδήμιος αὐδή	καὶ τὸ σουδάριον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ
that which the local tongue of the Syrians called the "sudarion"	and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head

The same ambiguity recurs in the line that describes Lazarus emerging from the tomb (which shares with the present passage the alliteration of σ):[82] 11.173 σουδάριον τόπερ εἶπε Σύρων στόμα, where the Latin term *sudarium* is classified as a Syriac borrowing. In both passages (*Par.* 20.30 and 11.173) there is no equivalent linguistic explanation in the corresponding verse of the Gospel[83] and nothing is said about the Latin origin of the term *sudarium*. Rather than being a direct borrowing from Latin, it was received through Aramaic into the Gospel of John; it was adopted among the words employed in commercial slang.[84] The fact that the noun "sudar" also appears in the Syriac language, as a borrowing, indicating a piece of cloth, complicates the issue.[85] However, even though there is no clear evidence that Nonnus knew Latin, it remains rather surpris-

80 The idea that Syriac is equivalent to Hebrew occurs quite often in ancient sources, where the two semitic languages are frequently described as "close": for instance, Origen *Hom. in Job* 390,36 (J.B. Pitra, *Analecta sacra spicilegio Solesmensi parata*, vol. 2, Paris, 1884), John Chrys. *In Gen.* PG 54.625 A, Theodoretus *Interpr. in Dan.* cap. VIII, PG 81.1448 A.

81 Accorinti (1996), p. 145: "N. non riesce a contenere la sua idiosincrasia per la lingua ebraica".

82 For *Par.* 11.173, see Accorinti (1996), p. 430.

83 At John 11.44 it is simply stated that Lazarus rises from the grave with the shroud around his head: καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ σουδαρίῳ περιεδέδετο.

84 On the incorporation of the term *sudarium* into Aramaic, see Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 303. Hebrew and Aramaic were both used in Jewish communities and they were described also as "Syriac". See, for instance, Feldman (1993), p. 21.

85 As observed by Accorinti (1996), p. 145. Greek words had also been incorporated into Syriac vocabulary in the fifth and six centuries, and the Syriac church grew more and more Hellenised. See Bowersock (1990), pp. 35–36.

ing that he considers *sudarium* a Syriac term.[86] There is a further parameter to this issue, that is, the ambiguity intrinsic in the concept of "Syria", which may indicate "Levant" in general as a vague geographical area.[87] This lack of precision appears in both Classical sources and later. For instance, in Herodotus the term "Syria" may *also* indicate the geographical areas of Palestine occupied by the Jews and the Philistines: 1.105,2 καὶ ἐπείτε ἐγένοντο ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ Συρίῃ.[88] In Strabo's geography there is a clear distinction between Syria and Coele Syria, but the author specifies that "some writers divide Syria into Coelo-Syrians and Syrians and Phoenicians, and add that four other tribes are mixed up with these, namely Judaeans, Idumaeans, Gazaeans, and Azotians and that they are partly farmers, like the Syrians and the Coelo-Syrians, and partly merchants, like the Phoenicians".[89] Interestingly, in the fourth century A.D., Ephraem Syrus, an author of Syrian origin, classifies the noun *sudarium* as a Jewish word in his poem on the Resurrection.[90]

86 Kuhn (1906, p. 94) observed that although the term was used in Syriac, the fact that it was a foreign word was evident. The question of Nonnus' knowledge of foreign languages is complex. Preller (1918, p. 111), believed that Nonnus was ignorant of Latin, as did Livrea (1987, p. 106, n. 23 and 1989, p. 28, n. 22). Accorinti (1996, p. 145) is also sceptical, although more open to concede that Nonnus might have had a basic knowledge of Latin. On the other hand, in the view of D'Ippolito (1987), Nonnus may have had a direct knowledge of Virgil and Ovid; see esp. pp. 760–761. Rochette (1997, pp. 264–265 with n. 29) summed up the views of scholars that maintained that Nonnus knew Latin and was influenced by Latin literature. On knowledge of Latin in the eastern part of the Empire, see also Cribiore (2007), pp. 54–61 (esp. for Syria and Egypt) and C. de Stefani, "Paolo Silenziario leggeva la letteratura latina?", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006), pp. 101–110, esp. pp. 103–104 (on Triphiodorus and Nonnus, *inter alios*).

87 Hadrian had named Judaea "Syria Palaestina" by 139, when, after a popular revolt, Jerusalem became a Roman province incorporated into Syria Palaestina. The next important development took place under Septimius Severus who divided Syria into two provinces: Syria Coele and Syria Phoenice. See Butcher (2003), p. 46 and p. 84. By the end of the fourth century, Syria had been divided into three provinces, Palaestina Prima, Secunda and Tertia, administrated by Constantinople; see Butcher (2003), p. 86. In the *Dionysiaca*, Syria seems to be equivalent to "Assyria"; see further Chuvin (1991), pp. 191–192.

88 In this passage, Herodotus is referring to the Scythians moving against Egypt. The term "Syria" is considered as an equivalent of Palestine also in several other passages. For instance, Hdt. 2.104 (Σύριοι οἱ ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ); 2.106 (ἐν δὲ τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ Συρίῃ), 3.5 (ἡ ⟨γῆ⟩ ἐστι Συρίων τῶν Παλαιστίνων καλεομένων) and 3.91 (Συρίη ἡ Παλαιστίνη καλεομένη), etc.

89 16.2,2 ἔνιοι δὲ τὴν Συρίαν ὅλην εἴς τε Κοιλοσύρους [καὶ Σύρους] καὶ Φοίνικας διελόντες τούτοις ἀναμεμῖχθαί φασι τέτταρα ἔθνη, Ἰουδαίους Ἰδουμαίους Γαζαίους Ἀζωτίους, γεωργικοὺς μέν, ὡς τοὺς Σύρους καὶ Κοιλοσύρους, ἐμπορικοὺς δέ, ὡς τοὺς Φοίνικας.

90 Ephraem *Sermo de resurrectione* 57 Phrantzoles.

With these ambiguities taken into account, the adjective Σύρος, while indicating the Hebrew language, also possessed a rather loose meaning suggesting a generic "East" and a generic "otherness".

A similar case is Nonnus' description of the epigraph on the Cross, where, in the account of the Fourth Gospel, Pilate ordered that the inscription be translated into the three most important languages:[91]

***Par.* 19.108–109**	**John 19.20**
ἦν δὲ μιῆς παλάμης νοερῷ κεχαραγμένον ὁλκῷ Αὐσονίῃ γλώσσῃ τε Σύρων καὶ Ἀχαΐδι φωνῇ.	καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον Ἑβραϊστί, Ῥωμαϊστί, Ἑλληνιστί.
And it was incised by the intelligent drawing of a single palm in the Ausonian language and in the Syrian and the Achaean tongue.	and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.

In this instance, the poet renders the adverb Ἑβραϊστί with the usual *periphrasis* for the Syriac language, φωνή Σύρων, whilst the other two adverbs, Ῥωμαϊστί and Ἑλληνιστί, are rendered with the equivalent elevated adjectives.[92] The implications of the trilingual inscription are highlighted in Cyril's comment, which draws attention to its prophetic significance, in that it announces the realm of Christ: the three chief languages, Hebrew, Latin and Greek,[93] which manifest the reign of the Saviour, represent a "primal offering (ἀπαρχή) of the confession of languages" of Jesus' kingship.[94]

91 The translation is not mentioned in the Synoptics, where only the epigraph ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων reported. In attributing the translation of the phrase into the three principal languages to Pilate's initiative, the Evangelist is apparently presenting him as a witness to the imminent arrival of the kingdom of Christ. See Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 435–436.

92 The expression Αὐσονίᾳ γλώττῃ appears in *Or. Sib.* P 80.

93 Most manuscripts of John's Gospel transmit this order of the languages, while a few arrange them in geographical order, from East to West (Hebrew, Greek, Latin). See Metzger (1971), p. 253. As Metzger observed, Hebrew was the national language, Latin the official language and Greek the common language.

94 *Jo.* 3.85,17–23 and 27–31 Pusey εὐμηχάνως δὴ λίαν καὶ διὰ θείας τινὸς καὶ ἀῤῥήτου πάλιν οἰκονομίας ἀνατεθεῖσθαι τὸν τίτλον φαίη τις ἂν τριπλῆν ἔχοντα τὴν γραφήν, Ἑβραϊστί, Ῥωμαϊστί, Ἑλληνιστί· προὔκειτο γὰρ ἐναργῶς τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν βασιλείαν ὁμολογῶν διὰ τριῶν τέως τῶν ἁπασῶν ἐπιφανεστέρων γλωσσῶν, καὶ ἀπαρχὴν ὥσπερ τινὰ τῷ σταυρωθέντι προσάγων τῆς περὶ αὐτοῦ λαληθείσης προφητείας. (…) *ἀπαρχὴ* τοιγαροῦν ὥσπερ τις ἀληθὴς *τῆς τῶν γλωσσῶν*

Nonnus seems to be consistently unwilling to use foreign words, unless they are clarified by an explicatory note. Such is the case of 19.101–102, where an explanation for the word τίτλον is provided. Nonnus notes that the term comes from the Latin *titulus* and elaborates further by including the equivalent Greek term, δέλτος:

Par. **19.101–104**	**John 19.19**
Καὶ Πιλάτος θηητὸν ἐπέγραφε μάρτυρι δέλτῳ γράμμα, τόπερ καλέουσι Λατινίδι τίτλον ἰωῇ. Ἦν δὲ σοφῷ καλάμῳ τετυπωμένον· οὗτος Ἰησοῦς οὗτος Ἰουδαίων βασιλεὺς Γαλιλαῖος Ἰησοῦς.	ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλᾶτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ· ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.
And Pilate inscribed a conspicuous engraving on a testifying tablet, which in the Latin tongue they call "titulus"; and the pen imprinted on it wisely: "this man is Jesus, this man is Jesus of Galilee, king of the Jews".	Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews".

Later lexica do offer the Latin term as a symonym for δέλτος. Cf. Photius and Suda s.v. δέλτος: πινακίδιον, τιτλάριον, σχεδάριον. Furthermore, Nonnus' δέλτος is μάρτυς, as happens elsewhere in Nonnian poetry: *D.* 21.305, *Par.* 20.140. In the latter verse, the phrase refers to the Gospel of John itself, the apostle being also μάρτυς ἀληθείης (20.138). It can be assumed that the label on the Cross is presented as implying the truth,[95] as Nonnus suggests with his addition σοφῷ καλάμῳ

ὁμολογίας ὁ τίτλος ἦν, βασιλέα κηρύσσων τὸν Ἰησοῦν (*one could say that it was quite well conceived by a certain divine and ineffable purpose that the inscription contained a triple title "in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek". It clearly confessed the reign of our Saviour in three of the best-known tongues, offering to the crucified one the first fruits, as it were, of the prophecy that was spoken concerning him* [...] *The inscription, then, was the true first fruits, as it were, of the confession of tongues, proclaiming Jesus to be king*).

95 From a different point of view Vian (1997, pp. 148–149) discussed the use of the adjective μάρτυς in *Par.* 18.150, 18.158 and 19.101 and concluded that it indicates the legalism to which Pilate adheres in terms of his words and deeds, the *titulus* on the Cross being an "official" label. Vian also suggests that the frequency of the term μάρτυς in Nonnus is the result of the influence of juridical vocabulary on Nonnus, who may have attended the law school in Beirut. Simelidis (2016, p. 304), on the other hand, discerns an influence of Gregory of Nazianzus in Nonnus' use of the term.

in the following line (19.103). Cyril also stresses the truthfulness of the label in his commentary (see above, discussion of *Par.* 19.108–109, with the relevant note).

Likewise in Book 13, in the episode of the Washing of the Feet, Nonnus inserts the adjective θυμβριάς, "of the river Tiber", to explain the Latin term *linteum*. In fact, θυμβριάς is a correction of the codices' θυμβεάς and τυμβεάς,[96] and it is very likely to be correct, especially because it is consistent with the presence of the Latin word λίντεον:[97]

***Par.* 13.21–22**	**John 13.4**
σφίγξας σκληρὸν ὕφασμα, τόπερ φάτο Θυμβριὰς αὐδή λίντεον, ἰκμαλέοιο ποδὸς μακτήριον ἀνδρῶν.	καὶ τίθησιν τὰ ἱμάτια, καὶ λαβὼν λέντιον διέζωσεν ἑαυτόν.
binding tight the stiff fabric which the Tiberine tongue called "linteum", to make it into a towel for the men's wet feet.	He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.

Here the insertion of the phrase Θυμβριὰς αὐδή to designate Latin, "the language of the city of the river Tiber", sets the context in which the Latin word that follows immediately afterwards, λίντεον, appears, thereby highlighting the notion of Latinity through reference to its most representative component, i.e., Rome. Cf. Θυμβριάδος … τεκούσης, for Rome, "mother" of Constantinople, in Paul. Sil. *Descr. S. Soph.* 151.[98] Furthermore, the reference to a river introduces the idea of water and is all the more relevant to Nonnus' rendering of the Johannine narration at this point, since the famous scene that follows involves the domestic use of water, which in such cases is traditionally drawn from a well, spring or river. In the case of Jerusalem, where the Washing of the Feet takes place, the city's basic water supply came from the Spring of Gihon.[99]

Nonnus' use of the Persian term γάζα is similar:

96 See the critical apparatus of Greco (2004), p. 53.

97 As Greco (2004, pp. 85–87) notes in her comment.

98 The adjective occurs in a similar form (Θυβριάς) in Christodorus Coptites, attributed to Virgil (*AP* 2.415).

99 See, for instance, H. Eising, "gîchôn: I. Spring in Jerusalem", in Botterweck and Ringgren (1977), vol. 2, p. 466.

Par. 8.33–34	John 8.20
γαζοφύλαξ ὅθι χῶρος ἀκούεται, ὁππόθι πολλοί ποικίλα δῶρα φέροντες ἐπεστείχοντο πολῖται.	ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ
in the place called Gazophylacium, where many citizens came to offer manifold gifts.	these words he spoke in the treasury

Although Nonnus does not indicate from which language the term derives, his text specifies that the place is called γαζοφύλαξ, because the citizens go there to deposit a variety of gifts. Nonnus' vocabulary seems to be inspired by the description of the people's offerings (δῶρα) in Luke 21.1 εἶδεν τοὺς βάλλοντας εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον τὰ δῶρα αὐτῶν πλουσίους (*and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box*). The adjective ποικίλα probably refers to the variety in value of people's presents, according to Luke's account in 21.1–4 concerning the rich gifts of the wealthy people and the poor widow's offering of two pennies.

It is worth stressing once again that Nonnus does not pedantically adhere to any strict guidelines in his handling of the borrowings. For instance, the Hebrew term ῥαββίν[100] is explained only once in the first Book, the first time that the term occurs, accurately reflecting the corresponding Johannine verse, where the term is explained: John 1.38 Ῥαββί (ὃ λέγεται μεθερμηνευόμενον Διδάσκαλε) rendered at *Par.* 1.142 as ῥαββίν, ὃ καὶ καλέουσι διδάσκαλε, πῇ, πόθι ναίεις. In the other instances[101] the paraphrast does not employ the usual paraphrastic procedure of clarifying the linguistic borrowing, even in the case of 20.71–72 καὶ Μαρίην ἰάχησε. Μεταστρεφθεῖσα δὲ κείνη / ῥαββουνὶ κατέλεξε (*and cried out: "Mary"! She turned round / and said: "Rabbuni"!*). Here Nonnus does not elucidate the foreign word in his rephrased text, in contrast to the corresponding Johannine verse, where it is explained: John 20.17 Μαρία. Στραφεῖσα ἐκείνη λέγει αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστί, Ραββουνί (ὃ λέγεται Διδάσκαλε). In this instance, the poet seems to assume that the reader recalls the explanation of the term in Book 1 and finds a repetition unnecessary.

In *Par.* 19.62–65, the poet explains the meaning of a Greek place-name, the *Lithostroton*, which is not developed further in the Gospel, by pointing out that origin of the name comes from the fact that the floor is paved with stones:

100 Occurring nine times in the *Paraphrasis*, in the forms of ῥαββίν and ῥαββουνί, in perfect correspondence with the nine occurrences of the Johannine Gospel.

101 1.200, 3.9 and 130, 4.149, 6.105, 9.11, 11.28, 20.72.

Par. 19.62–65	John 19.13
ἀγχιδόμῳ δ᾽ ἐκάθητο λιθοστρώτῳ παρὰ χώρῳ, οὔνομα τοῦτο φέροντι βοώμενον Ἑλλάδι φωνῇ, οἷα λίθοις στρωτοῖσι τετυγμένῳ· ἐνδαπίῳ δὲ Γαββαδὰ παφλάζοντι Σύρων κικλήσκετο μύθῳ.	καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστὶ δὲ Γαββαθά.
and he sat down at the Lithostroton, a place near the palace which bears this name in the tongue of the Greeks, because it was wrought with paved stones; in the local, spluttering word of the Syrians it was called Gabbatha.	and sat down on the judg- ment seat at a palace called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.

The clarification, superfluous to the Greek speaker, is merely an amplification elaborating the text: the phrase λίθοις στρωτοῖσι τετυγμένῳ is probably a variation of the Homeric τετυγμένα δώματα Κίρκης / ξεστοῖσιν λάεσσι (*Od.* 10.210–211). The author of *Christus Patiens* also calls the place Στρωτοὺς Λίθους (658). On the other hand, the toponym Γαββαδά is followed by the observation, already present in the Gospel, that this is the name of the place in Hebrew. Nonnus again employs usual *periphrasis* involving the genitive Σύρων. It is worth comparing the lexical choices that Nonnus makes in giving two different clarifications. In the explanation of the Greek name, the explanatory phrase includes the verb βοᾶν, which means "to shout", but also "to celebrate" or "to praise", while the Jewish language is characterised by the verb παφλάζω, not exactly flattering in either of its most common meanings: "to boil", or as it seems in this case, "to stammer".[102] Thus, Nonnus describes the foreign language as "stuttering", the phrasing once again implying his contempt towards the Jewish people.[103]

102 See LSJ s.v. and Preller (1918, p. 112). As Preller notes, the verb παφλάζω is used also at *Par.* 8.141 to designate the sound of the "boiling" voices of the Jews (καὶ θρασὺς Ἑβραίων ἐπεπάφλασε λαὸς ἀκούων; *and the audacious multitude of Hebrews listened, and blustered*). On the use of παφλάζω in these passages Livrea (1989, p. 28, n. 22) comments "che rende efficamente l'idiosincrasia dell'ellenofono verso le molte gutturali e laringali della lingua semitica". The verb also occurs with positive connotations in *Par.* 1.93, where it is attributed to the characteristics of a prophetic voice. See De Stefani (2002) *ad. loc.*, pp. 169–170.

103 As Kuiper (1918, pp. 230–231) notes, commenting on the present passage. For Nonnus' anti-Jewish attitude, see, for instance, below, *H. Interpretatio, 2. Trinitarian Theology, a. Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity, i. Par. 14.108–114 and* [*the lacking*] *ὁ πατὴρ μείζων μου ἐστίν. John 4.22b*.

C.2 *Place-Names of Theological Significance*

Particularly interesting is the appearance here of an explanation of a place-name, based on theological *Interpretatio*. The explanation concerning the name of the Golgotha is already present in the Gospel. However, the poet elaborates on it, adding important information drawn from exegetical material:

***Par.* 19.89–91**	**John 19.17**
εἰσόκε χῶρον ἵκανε φατιζομένοιο Κρανείου, Ἀδὰμ πρωτογόνοιο φερώνυμον ἄντυγι κόρσης, Γολγοθὰ τὸν καλέεσκε Σύρων στόμα.	ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον Κρανίου Τόπον, ὃ λέγεται Ἑβραϊστὶ Γολγοθᾶ.
until He reached the place called "Cranium", named after the orb of first-born Adam's head, and which the Syrians' mouth called Golgotha.	and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

An explanation of the Hebrew "Golgotha" is given in John, too (it is "the place of the skull"), but Nonnus goes beyond this explanation and clarifies whose skull it is that the term actually refers to: with the adjective φερώνυμον the poet lays emphasis on the explanation he provides and says that the place took its name from the head of Adam, the first man.[104] This interpretation[105] is found in John Chrysostom, in his homily 85 (on John 19.16–20.9),[106] in Origen and

104 For a discussion of the etymology of the name with reference to Akkadian, Semitic and Egyptian traditions, see F. Maass, "ādhām", in Botterweck and Ringgren (1977), vol. 1, pp. 75–79. For a discussion of the dimensions and aspects of the idea of "manhood" in the Old Testament, see id. pp. 79–87.

105 Which is not the only one. Other interpretations stress the "skull" as symbolising those executed there. Scholars accept that the real reason for this name is the shape of the ground. See further Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), p. 270 and p. 456, n. 10, and, more briefly, Barrett (1978), p. 548.

106 PG 59.459,55–60 τινές φασιν ἐκεῖ τὸν Ἀδὰμ τετελευτηκέναι καὶ κεῖσθαι· καὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, ἔνθα ὁ θάνατος ἐβασίλευσεν, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ τρόπαιον στῆσαι. Καὶ γὰρ τρόπαιον ἐξῄει βαστάζων τὸν σταυρὸν κατὰ τῆς τοῦ θανάτου τυραννίδος· καὶ καθάπερ οἱ νικηταὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἔφερε τὸ τῆς νίκης σύμβολον (*some say that there Adam had died and lay buried, and that Jesus set up His trophy over death in the place where death had begun its rule. For He went forth bearing His cross as a trophy in opposition to the tyranny of death,*

Epiphanius, who explicitly associates the place of the Crucifixion with the Original Sin, associated with Adam, the first man, which was wiped out by Christ's sacrifice.[107] The antithetical association between Adam, bearer of death for mankind, and Christ, bearer of life (Adam being a "type" of Christ),[108] is common in Christian literature[109] and forms one of the "chief Biblical bases for the solidarity of Christ and mankind" in the fourth century.[110] Cyril also places Adam and Christ in parallel in his commentary on John.[111] Nonnus' πρωτογόνοιο, on Adam, recalls the traditional πρωτόπλαστος, mentioned by Epiphanius, in connection with Adam and his burial in Golgotha. The poet combines the information from the patristic sources with a poetic *periphrasis* for the "head", ἄντυγι κόρσης, a *junctura* he also uses in the *Dionysiaca* (4.377, 8.84, 26.159 and 343, 39.304, 41.200) to designate the curve of the head.[112]

The comment on the name "Siloam" in the episode of the healing of the man born blind in Book 9 is extremely interesting, since it deviates from the usual explanation presented in various exegetical texts. The passage, conveying Christ's command to the blind man to wash himself in the Pool, runs:

Par. **9.35–37**	**John 9.7**
"ἔρχεό μοι καὶ νίπτε τεὸν ῥέθος, ἧχι Σιλωάμ πηγῆς ἀγχιπόροιο ῥέει πανδήμιον ὕδωρ, ὕδωρ στελλομένοιο προώνυμον ἐκ σέο πομπῆς".	ὕπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωὰμ ὃ ἑρμηνεύεται Ἀπεσταλμένος.

and, as is customary with conquerors, He also carried on His shoulders the symbol of His victory).

107 Origen, *Commentariorum series in evangelium Matthaei* 265 (E. Klostermann, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 11, Leipzig, 1933), Epiph. *Pan.* 2.209,10–18 Holl. The Nonnian passage is briefly discussed by Preller (1918, p. 116) who mentions Epiphanius' and Origen's references to Golgotha as the burial place of Adam.

108 Tissoni (1998, p. 78) believes that the correlation between Adam and Christ in *Par.* 19.87–90 (Adam being a "figure" for Christ) is parallel to that between Dionysus and Christ (Dionysus being again a "type" for Christ).

109 For this idea in Paul, see Wilken (1971), pp. 93–95 and Macaskill (2010), pp. 65–66, and for Irenaeus' development of it, see Wilken (1971), pp. 97–98. For Methodius' discussion of the Adam-Christ typology, see id. pp. 99–101. See also Young (1997), pp. 197–199. For Christian "typology", see below, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance*, intr. note and *1. The Raised Serpent, The (healing) Saviour, Eternity*.

110 As Wilken (1971, p. 102) puts it. See further Wilken (1971), pp. 102–106.

111 For instance, 1.693,13–19, 3.63,13–17 Pusey. See further Wilken (1971), pp. 107–118.

112 Cf. LSJ s.v. ἄντυξ II 4.

(*cont.*)

Par. 9.35–37	John 9.7
"Go, I say, and wash your face where the water of the neighboring spring of Siloam flows, belonging to all the people and called, even before your being sent there, the water of the one dispatched".	Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which means Sent).

Nonnus elaborates his rendering of Jesus' words with epic elements of metre, structure and phrasing. The beginning of each of the three lines which Jesus speaks is linked to the end of the previous one with enjambment (35–36) and with *anaphora* (36–37), the latter figure stressing the importance of the concept of water for the episode. Lines 36 and 37 are further joined through the *homoeoptoton* between their first hemistichs which end at the same caesura (feminine) and thus produce a neat and rhythmical correspondence. A significant element contributing to the elevated tone of the vocabulary is the use of ῥέθος, a poetic synonym for πρόσωπον, unique in Nonnus, which is found in this sense (as "face") mostly in tragedy and Hellenistic poetry.[113] In all three lines the idea of movement is omnipresent: ἔρχεο, for the movement of the man, ῥέει, for the movement of the water, στελλομένοιο and πομπῆς, again for the movement of the man, which thus encloses Jesus' sentence in the idea of the blind man walking towards the Pool. Thus the words of the Jesus of Nonnus are characterised by the notion of the flow of the water and the man's path towards it, which will, of course, prove the cause of his salvation. The idea of the man's movement, which is elaborated in rhetorical and poetic terms, is also expounded on an exegetical level.

The Johannine narration includes a brief interpretation of the word Siloam as "the one who was sent", which is probably based on an incorrect etymology, albeit one that influenced Christian literature with its messianic overtones.[114] Nonnus' elaboration in l. 37 refers to a more detailed account of the reason why the spring took this name and, more importantly, is different from the usual explanation. In the *Lives of the Prophets* we learn that the water gushed from this point on the earth at the request of Isaiah and so acquired its name, as it

113 For instance, Soph. *Ant.* 529, Eur. *Herc.* 1204, Theocr. 29.16, [Theocr.] 23.39, Call. fr. 67.13.
114 See Grypeou and Spurling (2013), pp. 402–403 with n. 105. The authors suggest that John confused "Siloam" with "shiloah", associated with the meaning "sent".

was "sent" to him by God: ἀπεστάλη αὐτῷ ἐξ αὐτοῦ.[115] The Christian interpretation of the naming of the spring has ἀπεσταλμένος designating Christ, *sent* to humanity by the Father, an allegory implied in the Gospel itself.[116] In his commentary on John, Cyril, as is to be expected, reproduces this exegesis.[117]

Nonnus, however, gives Jesus' words a different dimension, which both ignores the literal circumstances that led to the naming of the spring (the spring was the divine answer to Isaiah's wish in the Old Testament) and also does not connect ἀπεσταλμένος with Christ's quality as the one "that is sent", as is usually the case in a Christian context.[118] Instead, the poet makes Christ state that Siloam bears this name, because it predicts that the blind man will walk towards it, having been *sent* thither by Christ. Nonnus' στελλομένοιο and πομπή represent a synonymic *amplificatio* of the idea of Christ sending the man to the Pool and so emphasise the man's course, directed by Christ.[119] With πρώνυμον, Nonnus goes on to state that this course is so important that it will retrospectively and (literally) miraculously reveal and justify the full meaning of a place-name established long ago.

For such an explanation of "Siloam", the notion of the decisiveness of Christ's sending the man to the Pool, founded by Isaiah, is combined with the image of the Messiah as a future deliverer of captives and one that will *make blind people see*, in Isaiah's prophecy (*Is*. 61.1). The account given in the present Nonnian passage takes from *Isaiah* the idea that the Son of God will give sight to the blind and applies it to the actual healing of the blind man of John 9. Since

115 *Vit. Proph*. 41.20–42.1–3 Schermann (T. Schermann, *Prophetarum vitae fabulosae*, Leipzig 1907) καὶ ὁ θεὸς τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ Σιλωὰμ ἐποίησε διὰ τὸν προφήτην, ὅτι πρὸ τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν ὀλιγοψυχήσας ηὔξατο πιεῖν ὕδωρ, καὶ εὐθέως ἀπεστάλη αὐτῷ ἐξ αὐτοῦ· διὰ τοῦτο ἐκλήθη Σιλωάμ, ὅπερ ἑρμηνεύεται ἀπεσταλμένος.

116 See, for instance, Dodd (1953), p. 357, Barrett (1978), p. 359, Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), p. 243, Brodie (1993), p. 347, Ridderbos (1997), p. 336. Cf. Eusebius *Dem. Ev*. 7.1,115–116 Heikel (I.A. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 6, Leipzig 1913). Eusebius' account at *Comm. in Is*. 1.49 Ziegler (J. Ziegler, *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 9. Berlin 1975) and Epiphanius' account at *Pan*. 2.43,10–13 Holl and elsewhere is similar. Grypeou and Spurling (2013, pp. 402–403 with n. 106) suggest that it is on the basis of this false etymology (Siloam~sent) that Eusebius associates John 9.7 with *Gen*. 49.10, which refers to Messiah's advent, and conclude that Eusebius must have had some knowledge of the Hebrew text and / or that he consulted Jewish teachers on various scriptural matters.

117 2.157,20–26 Pusey, quoted by Serra (1997), p. 138.

118 Commenting on John 9.7, Westcott (1908, vol. 2, p. 35) states it explicitly: "the interpretation of the name connects the pool with Christ (xvii. 3, etc.), and not with the man".

119 The eighteenth century paraphrast of Nonnus' *Paraphrase* (*Athous, Dionysiou* 326), renders Nonnus' expression in clear and neat prose: ὕδωρ … προονομασθὲν ἀπὸ τῆς σῆς ἀποστολῆς ἐκεῖσε ἀποστελλομένου. See Franchi (2012a), p. 83.

the Pool is connected with Isaiah anyway, and is also seen from a messianic perspective by Christian authors, it is associated here even more closely with the blind man, while its name is linked to the fact that the man was sent there, and, subsequently, albeit silently, also linked to the fact that he was healed. All this is consistently treated with respect to Jesus' authority. Furthermore, the Pool of Siloam, as it appears in John's Gospel in connection with the blind man's cure, prefigures the Baptism.[120] Thus the Pool's general quality of "pretelling" a new salvific situation, offered by Christ and unheard of as yet (cf. Nonnus' προώνυμον in *Par.* 9.37), is not unprecedented. It must be further remembered that Old Testament also provides a background for the salvific quality of the springs of Jerusalem, in their metaphysical form as the rivers of Paradise.[121]

Nonnus' view that the Pool took its name from the blind man being *sent* to it is unparalleled in extant Greek patristic literature. Similar to this interpretation, however, are comments on the Johannine passage that stress Christ's action in sending the man to the Pool as crucial for the man's cure, although no extant source explicitly mentions this act as a retrospective explanation for the name "Siloam". For instance, the sixth century author Leontius Presbyter in his reading of the blind man's dialogue with the Jews, states that the now healed man insists that the agent of the healing was the one who *sent* him (ἀποστείλας) to the Pool, i.e., Jesus, rather than the Pool itself which is interpreted as "the one that *is sent*".[122] The importance of the act of Jesus in *sending* the blind man to Siloam (πέμπων /-ειν εἰς τὸν Σιλωάμ) is emphasised also in John Chrysostom's commentary on John (PG 59.311,20, 27, 41–42). The account probably closest to Nonnus' statement comes from Origen. It emphasises the importance of Jesus in sending people to Siloam, so that they (we) acquire mental eyes, and connects this act on the part of Christ with Siloam's name, albeit in a playful manner. It is a passage from Origen's lost *Commentary on Isaiah*, surviving in Jerome's translation: *vere autem caecus iste a nativitate erat gentilium populus, cui Salvator reddidit visum, saliva sua ungens oculos ejus, et mittens ad Siloam, quod interpretatur missus. Mittebat quippe eos, quos spiritu unxit ut crederent, ad Siloam, id est ad Apostolos et magistros, propter quod scriptum est de Siloa, quia interpretatur missus. Et quotiescumque incipimus a Jesu visitari, ut*

120 Cf., for instance, Cyril, *Jo.* 2.157,17–21 Pusey. Serra (1997, p. 138) quotes Augustine, *In Jo.* 44.2 *Lavit ergo oculos in ea piscina, quae interpretatur missus, baptizatus est in Christo.*

121 See H. Eising, "gîchôn: III. Streams of the City of God", in Botterweck and Ringgren (1977), pp. 467–468.

122 "Ὁ Σιλωάμ σε οὖν ἐθεράπευσεν, μὴ ὁ ἀποστείλας σε ἐκεῖ ὃν λέγεις θεόν". Ὁ δὲ τυφλὸς πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους· "Οὐχ ὁ Σιλωάμ, ἀλλ' ὁ ἀποστείλας με ἐθεράπευσεν· ὁ γὰρ Σιλωὰμ ὁ ἀπεσταλμένος ἑρμηνεύεται" (*In Mesopent.* 190–194. P. Allen and C. Datema, *Leontii presbyteri Constantinopolitani homiliae*, Turnhout, 1987).

recipiamus animae oculos, mittit nos ad Siloam, hoc est missus (Jerome, *Translatio Homiliarum Origenis in Visiones Isaiae*, homily 6, PL 24.1129).

Nonnus' exegetical "improvisation" in the passage in question has been explained as pointing to the idea of baptism and the apostolic mission, i.e. the relation between sender and those being sent, which also reflects the relation between Father and Son within the Trinity.[123] If the interpretation of Siloam here really is an original Nonnian contribution after all, this will not be the first such,[124] although the rarity of this explanation and its status as a concise theory within the theological connotations of the healing-of-the-blind episode makes the present instance exceptionally striking.

From the instances discussed above, it is demonstrated that Nonnus usually chooses to add explanations of the foreign terms of the Gospel and in doing so he develops his narrative through the addition of ornamental elements, on the one hand, and with material that enhances the theological exegesis, on the other. Theological *interpretatio* is employed in cases in which the significance of Christ's action, related to places, is to be emphasised and further clarified. Either in supposedly simpler explanations or in explanations more significant from a theological point of view, the very care taken in the choice of vocabulary and in the construction of the verses can be a parameter that intensifies the focus on the explanation itself.

D Imagery with Theological Significance

In this section, we will examine certain images that possess theological significance. These are selected on a representative basis from the *Paraphrase*, as they show how Nonnus occasionally elaborates on John's statements that carry particular theological weight. Nonnus expands on John's theology, which is sometimes already expressed through concise images in the Gospel. This he does by developing them into memorable images influenced by the Old Testament, by patristic and other Christian literature and also by pagan models. The images examined here are mainly based on Johannine images, either metaphorical or otherwise, associated with Christ, and describe, in visually impressive terms, various situations and ideas connected with human salvation through the Son of God: the paradise that is opened to the believ-

123 See Serra (1997), pp. 138–139.
124 Cf. Nonnus' rendering of John 8.25 in *Par.* 8.61–62. See Simelidis (2016), p. 295.

ers, Christ's quality as Lord, healer and saviour of humanity and aspects of Christ's passion. The Johannine metaphorical motifs investigated below, as developed by Nonnus, are the raised Serpent, the imperishable abode and the imperishable Bread, the two latter being variations on the idea of eternity. Interestingly, early Christian iconography does anyway possess this exegetical function, sharing it with exegetical Christian literature.[125] Thus it can be argued that Nonnus' "theological" poetic images serve the same purpose as that of painted images, in that they both address vision, physical or mental, and elaborate on the same symbols, deciphering, as it were, the message of the Biblical text.[126] It should be observed that Nonnus expands on Biblical allegorical symbols, or types (the Serpent, the Bread), as patristic texts also do, thus placing himself in the long tradition of Christian typology.[127]

D.1 *The Raised Serpent, The (Healing) Saviour, Eternity*

In Book 3 Nonnus elaborates on Jesus' speech to Nicodemus through a variety of poetic images, some of which spring directly from the Johannine text and some of which are autonomous additions. In reworking verses 14–15, the paraphrast expands on the Old Testament simile about Moses and the serpent (*Book of Numbers*, 21.4–9), which is employed by Christ in answering Nicodemus' question in John 3.14–15:

***Par.* 3.71–79**	**John 3.14–15**
καὶ σκοπιῆς παρὰ πέζαν ἐρημάδος οἷά τε Μωσῆς δακνομένων ὕψωσεν ὄφιν ληθήμονα φωτῶν δουρατέης μεθέποντα τύπον ποιητὸν ἀκάνθης, οὕτω γυιοβόρων τελέων ἀλκτήρια νούσων καὶ πάις ἀνθρώποιο βροτοῖς ὑψούμενος ἔσται, λυσιπόνου μίμημα δρακοντείοιο προσώπου, ὄφρα μιν ὃς δέξοιτο νόου πειθήμονι θεσμῷ, ζωῆς κυδιάνειραν ἐσαθρήσειε γαλήνην, εἰς ὅσον εὐρυγένειος ἑλίσσεται ἔμπεδος αἰών.	καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὕψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὕτως ὑψωθῆ- ναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
And just as Moses, on the edge of the desert watch, raised up the snake, the destroyer of bitten men,	And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

125 See Jensen (2000), pp. 77–79, 181–182 and id. (2007).

126 For this feature of the iconography, see Jensen (2000), p. 77.

127 For a discussion of the typology, see further Young (1997), pp. 152–155, 192–201.

(*cont.*)

Par. 3.71–79	John 3.14–15
as an artificial replica of wooden thistle, in the same manner, by creating an antidote for limb-devouring diseases, the Son of man shall also be raised up for mortals, in imitation of the pain-loosing serpentine face, so that whoever receives Him obediently in his mind might look upon the glorifying serenity of life for as long as broad-bearded, steadfast Aion turns round.	

The structure of the simile is retained: οἷά ... οὕτω, mirroring the Johannine καθώς ... οὕτως. The scene is located in a deserted place, as happens in the Gospel account, too, but in the paraphrased text the presence of the term σκοπιή, largely employed by Homer,[128] suggests that it evolves in a conspicuous location, the noun πέζα usually meaning "region".[129] The serpent is defined as ληθήμων, "generating obliviousness", which is most probably a Nonnian coinage.[130] Nonnus attributes it to the supernatural power of the bronze serpent, who cured the sick Israelites in the corresponding Biblical episode.

At *Numbers* 21.8–9, the bronze Serpent is the means by which the Jews are cured when they are bitten by other snakes. The Lord says to Moses ποίησον σεαυτῷ ὄφιν καὶ θὲς αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ σημείου καὶ ἔσται ἐὰν δάκῃ ὄφις ἄνθρωπον, πᾶς ὁ δεδηγμένος ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ζήσεται: this is exactly what Moses does and when a man is bitten by a snake hereafter, he looks at the serpent Moses has made from bronze and lives, ἔζη. The allegorical function of the Serpent, already stated in the Gospel, is even more explicitly asserted and clarified in the Nonnian re-elaboration.

Firstly, the poet uses the noun τύπος, which explains that the serpent stands for the crucified Christ,[131] the Cross rendered by the expression "wooden spine"

128 E.g. *Od.* 4.524, 8.285, 302; 10.97, 148, 194.
129 See Accorinti (1996), p. 154.
130 A related term appears in Hesychius, λ 810 ληθημόνοισι· ληθάργοις.
131 For Cyril's discussion of the wrath of God as appeased in Christ's sacrifice in his commentary on the Johannine Serpent, see Koen (1991), p. 90. For a discussion of the Johannine passages in which the Son of Man being "lifted up" implies crucifixion and glorification, at the same time (3.14–15, 8.28, 12.32–34), see Bauckham (2008), pp. 47–59. It is noteworthy that serpents around a staff have a symbolic significance in pagan culture. For ancient

(δουρατέη ἄκανθα). Τύπος is an important term in theology, as it is used to signify a model, a pattern or a parable, foreshadowing its fulfilment, as Young puts it.[132] Nonnus' use of τύπος here is to be seen in the light of its use in Christian interpretation, although the poet uses the word frequently in the *Dionysiaca*, too, in a comparable, but essentially different sense, generally that of a mirroring image of persons or situations.[133] In the passage we are looking at here, τύπος is not alone as a marker of Christian exegesis. Nonnus uses one more eloquent term, μίμημα. Being a term drawn from literary criticism, in Christian interpretation μίμησις is the "figural representation"[134] and also refers to the typology terminology, employed by Christian commentators in discussions of Old Testament's symbolisms of New Testament's truths. Theodore of Mopsuestia treats these terms in characteristic fashion.[135] Notably, in both the *Dionysiaca* and in the *Paraphrase* Nonnus employs combinations of τύπος and μίμημα (or their compounds) in phrasings which resemble, to a certain extent, the phrasing in the present passage to describe various situations in which two persons, objects, shapes, images, sounds, actions, reflect one another.[136] It has been

Greeks they stood for the union of male and female ψυχή which preserved life. See Onians (1951), p. 122, n. 3.

132 Young (1997), p. 153. For the use of the term, *inter alios*, by Paul and its criticism by John Chrysostom, see id. p. 182.

133 As far as the *Dionysiaca* are concerned, the matching-contrasting pair is τύπος-ἀντίτυπος, corresponding or opposite images which stand in balance to one another. According to Lindsay (1965, p. 385), "the antitype creates the full reality of the type, completes the type, reflects it, and yet opposes it". Lindsay's examples include, *inter alia*, fighters with "antitypal" leapings (σκαρθμοῖς ἀντιτύποισι, *Dion.* 29.220), reflections on mirrors (e.g. *Dion.* 6.207), gods' transformations into deceptive shapes (e.g. *Dion.* 40.74–78), constellations in the form of animals (41.245), etc.

134 Young (1997), p. 161.

135 Young (1997, pp. 161–176) discusses the term in relation to Antiochene exegesis in which the Scripture's phrasing and content was "mimetic" of divine truths. Young (1997, p. 175) mentions the example of the interpretation of Theodore, according to whom the events of Jonah's life are a μίμησις of those of Jesus' life: cf. *Comm. in xii proph. min.*, *Jon*, pr. 1.100–107 H.N. Sprenger, *Theodori Mopsuesteni comm. in XII Proph.* Wiesbaden 1977). Theodore observes that δηλονότι ἐστὶ μέν τις μίμησις τῶν πραγμάτων, while also referring to the differences between Jonah's and Jesus' lives. For Theodore, who elsewhere says that every type has a certain μίμησις (see Young 1997, p. 175; ἅπας τύπος μίμησιν ἔχει τινὰ πρὸς ἐκεῖνο, *Proh. Mi* 4.1–3a,25–26), Jonah himself is a *type* of Christ: τύπον αὐτὸν τῶν κατὰ τὸν δεσπότην Χριστόν (ll. 121–122).

136 For instance, *Dion.* 8.23 ἀντίτυπον μίμημα βοὸς μυκήσατο λαιμῷ, 9.187 αἰθερίων μιμηλὸν ἔχων τύπον αἰόλον ἄστρων, 18.115 ἀντίτυπον μίμημα Σεληναίῃσι κεραίαις, 25.8 τύπον μιμηλὸν Ὁμήρου, 40.74 Μορρέος ἀντιτύποιο φέρεν μίμημα προσώπου. For a collection of similar Nonnian phrasings, see De Stefani (2002), pp. 184–184, on *Par.* 1.117 ἀντίτυπον μίμημα πελειάδος. For the use of the terms in the *Paraphrase*, see also Rotondo (2014), p. 622.

observed that both τύπος and μίμημα bear (Neo-)Platonic connotations in Nonnus.[137] Here, however, it is towards the sphere of Christian interpretation that the poet moves through his use of these two words which are also laden with theological significance. The vocabulary of the pagan context of the *Dionysiaca* acquires a Christian meaning in this passage. Nonnus makes it explicit that the image of the Serpent is actually a model, a *type*, and so functions as an exegete, who uses the appropriate terminology to elucidate the spirit of the Scripture and to draw attention to its prophecy-fulfilment element, exactly as the commentators of John also do.

Repeatedly employed by Christian authors,[138] the image of the Serpent as a prefiguration of the Crucifixion became a widely-used motif, as is attested by the fact that the Serpent is depicted in the form of a Cross in later iconography.[139] It is also commented upon, as one would expect, in the two major exegetical treatises that Nonnus had at his disposal: the relevant passage of John Chrysostom's commentary on the Gospel of John (homily 27, on John 3.12–16), and Cyril's commentary.[140] The term τύπος occurs in both texts to describe the Old Testament prefiguration of the New Testament reality. Moses' Serpent

137 See Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 260, on *Par*. 11.135 λίθος ἀντιτύποιο φέρων μίμημα θυρέτρου (on the "door" of Lazarus' tomb). Spanoudakis draws attention to the philosophical overtones of μίμημα, which recalls the famous Platonic concept of the diptych material world / real world of ideas, the former being a reflection, an *imitation* of the latter.

138 See Weitzmann-Bernabò (1999), p. 204, n. 1, with bibliography. Perhaps the earliest mention after John of the Serpent as a prefiguration of Christ and the Crucifixion is by Justin martyr (*Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo* 94.1–5 Goodspeed [E.J. Goodspeed, *Die ältesten Apologeten*, Göttingen 1915]). For a later example, cf., for instance, Greg. Nyss. *Vita Moys.* 2.272–276 with Simonetti (1984) *ad locc.* (pp. 332–333).

139 Cf. the twelfth century Seraglio Octateuch from Constantinople, fol. 359r, The Brazen Serpent (see Weitzmann-Bernabò 1999, fig. 967), and the eleventh / twelfth century illustrated *Orations* of Gregory Nazianzenus from Constantinople in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Coislin 239, fol. 18. Cf. also fol. 172v of Vaticanus Graecus 747 (eleventh century) and fol. 168 v. of cod. A.I of Smyrna, Evangelical School Library (twelfth century, destroyed in the 13–15 September 1922 burning of Smyrna by the Turks, for which see G. Horton, *The Blight of Asia*, 1926, pp. 50–54), in Weitzmann-Bernabò (1999), figg. 966 and 968 respectively. For the datings, see Weitzmann-Bernabò (1999), p. 3. For an indicative example of the Western art of the twelfth century, see Jensen (2017), p. 26.

140 Cyril 1.225,21–27 Pusey ἦν γὰρ τῷ δηχθέντι τὸ φάρμακον, τὸ εἰς πρόσωπον ἰδεῖν τοῦ κειμένου, καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐσχάτοις ἀπαλλαγὴν ἡ πίστις μετὰ τῆς θέας τοῖς ὁρῶσιν ἐπραγματεύετο. Τὰ μὲν οὖν τῆς ἱστορίας ἐν τούτοις· ὅλον δὲ πάλιν, ὡς ***ἐν τύπῳ*** τῷ πράγματι, τὸ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως καταγράφει μυστήριον (*for the medicine for those bitten was to look at the face of the serpent put before them, and faith along with what was seen worked deliverance at the last extremity for those who saw it. That is the historical narrative. By this deed he, in turn, inscribes the whole mystery of the incarnation* ***typologically***). For Chrysostom's passage, see three notes below.

is a *type* of the Crucifixion and Nonnus says exactly this with his δουρατέης μεθέποντα τύπον ποιητὸν ἀκάνθης. Nonnus, however, goes on to add a subtle but striking detail, in that he calls Christ the imitator of the Serpent (μίμημα δρακοντείοιο προσώπου), in addition to presenting the Serpent as the type of the Cross in established and expected fashion. It can be argued that if the Serpent is the type, then the person in the future whose existence the type implies and who will prove its realisation, i.e. Christ, is its "imitator". However, it is still peculiar to describe Christ as a μίμημα. Through his phrasing, Nonnus seems to be saying that Christ bears a certain similarity to the raised Serpent, but in fact is much more. Therefore it is Christ, the greater entity, who appears later and so realises the symbol, who shares similarities with the Serpent—the smaller and "incomplete" forerunner. Christ thus, in a sense, actively imitates the Serpent, as He controls the fulfilment of the prophecy, rather than the other way round.[141]

In his rephrasing of John's account, Nonnus introduces the idea of Christ as healer. Nonnus uses νοῦσος, the epic noun we might expect, to capture the malady of humanity. Ἀλκτήριον, which designates the Son of Man as the protector from sickness, echoes the didactic hexameters of Nicander (occurring at *Al.* 350, where the *iunctura* ἀλκτήρια νούσων appears at the same metrical position, and *Th.* 528).[142] The presence of such a notion shows that Nonnus is referring directly the Old Testament account after he has employed the terminology of *types*, doing so this time through again giving the content of the narrative of the *Numbers*, which John does not repeat. Nonnus reminds the reader of the healing quality of Moses' bronze Serpent, an idea which John omits. Nonnus

141 Another unconventional reading of the Serpent imagery is the account of Gregory of Nazianzus, who says, in his second homily on Easter, that the Serpent, rather than being a type, is an antitype of Christ: *In sanc. Pascha* PG 36.653,27–30 (see also Weitzmann-Bernabò [1999], pp. 204–205). Although "antitype" usually designates the person or event that is foreshadowed by the type, which means that the type precedes the antitype (Young 1997, pp. 152, 197; in the present instance, the antitype would be Christ, who is foreshadowed by the Serpent), Gregory seems to use the term to show that the antitype is not the "original". This is how Theodore Studites understands Gregory's phrasing in his discussion of Gregory's view in his *Sermones adversus iconoclastas* (2.40 C.I. Dalkos, *Θεοδώρου τοῦ Στουδίτου, Λόγοι ἀντιρρητικοὶ κατὰ εἰκονομάχων καὶ στίχοι τινες ἰαμβικοί*, Athens 2006). See also K. Parry, *Depicting the Word: Byzantine Iconophile Thought of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries* (Leiden 1996), p. 129. Theodore's interpretation is summarised in the statement οὗ γὰρ τὸ πρωτότυπον οὐ λατρευτέον, τούτου καὶ τὸ παράγωγον ἀποπτυστέον. Theodore explains Gregory's antitype as the παράγωγον, the reproduction, so to speak (Serpent), of a prototype (Christ). Similarly exceptional is the use of antitype in Hebrews 9.24, where the sanctuary made by people is an antitype of the real, the heavenly one (χειροποίητα … ἅγια … ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθινῶν). See Young (1997), p. 197.

142 See Massimilla (2016), pp. 265–266. The term also occurs at Qu. Sm. 6.364, 9.121 and 11.424. At Pind. *Pyth.* 3.7 we find an almost identical *iunctura*: ἀλκτῆρα νούσων.

treats his exegetical paraphrase in the spirit of John Chrysostom who explicitly refers to healing in the relevant passage of his commentary that we have just mentioned. As Nonnus does implicitly, Chrysostom asserted in clear terms the complete analogy between the healing function of Moses' Serpent in the past and of Christ in the present.[143] Nonnus points directly to the *Septuagint's* base text of John's account, on the one hand,[144] and also refers to the idea of Christ as physician, the *Christus medicus*, on the other. This motif is well established in the early Christian tradition and focuses on Jesus' soteriological ministry.[145]

In expanding on John's narrative, however, Nonnus introduces one more element taken from the Old Testament account. The poet changes John's πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ to the elaborate ὅς δέξοιτο νόου πειθήμονι θεσμῷ, the "obedient law" of the mind—almost a personification—, while also adding to his

143 PG 59.159 ὁρᾷς τὴν τοῦ σταυροῦ αἰτίαν, καὶ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ σωτηρίαν; Ὁρᾷς ***τοῦ τύπου*** πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν συγγένειαν; Ἐκεῖ θάνατον διέφυγον Ἰουδαῖοι, ἀλλὰ τὸν πρόσκαιρον· ἐνταῦθα τὸν αἰώνιον οἱ πιστεύοντες. Ἐκεῖ δήγματα ὄφεων ἰᾶτο ὁ κρεμάμενος ὄφις, ἐνταῦθα τοῦ νοητοῦ δράκοντος ἐθεράπευσε τὰς πληγὰς ὁ σταυρωθεὶς Ἰησοῦς· (*do you perceive the reason for the crucifixion and for the salvation proceeding from it? Do you perceive the relationship of the* ***figure*** *with the reality? In the former, the Jews escaped death, but it was temporal death; in the latter, the faithful escape eternal death. In the former, the uplifted serpent healed the bites of serpents; in the latter, the crucified Jesus healed the wounds inflicted by the spiritual dragon*).

144 For early Christians' interest in, and focus on, Old Testament narratives in which Christ is foreshadowed and for a discussion of the artistic representation of the relevant scenes in an exegetical spirit, see Jensen (2007), *passim*, esp. pp. 74–84.

145 The God of Israel is conceived as a healing power at *Exodus* 15.26 (ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος ὁ ἰώμενός σε), an idea also exploited in a Latin Bible epic, the *Heptateuch* of "Cyprian" (*Hept.* 570 *qui pectora curo*; see Herzog 1975, p. 142). The idea of Christ as a physician who heals human souls appears as early as the beginning of the second century in Ignatius of Antioch (*Ep.* 1.7,2 to the Ephesians). See Dörnemann (2013), who discusses the works of Ignatius of Antioch, Clemens of Alexandria and Origen. The concept of Christ-Logos, healing like a physician with His Word, is particularly significant in Clemens (for instance, *Protrepticus*, 1.8,2–3; *Paedagogus*, 1.83,2–3; 1.3,1–3; *al.*) and in the works of Origen (for instance, *Contra Celsum* 2.24 and 2.67 Borret; *Comm. in Jo.* 32.6,69 Blanc; *Hom. in Lev.* 8.1 W.A. Baehrens, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 6, Leipzig 1920). The simile occurs also in John Chrysostom (for instance, *In acta apostolorum homiliae* PG 60.155,43–44 καθάπερ ἰατρὸς ἄριστος) and Basil (for instance, *Hom. Ps. 38* PG 29.433 C; *Hom. Quod Deus non est auctor malorum* PG 31.333 B–C). It recurs in the works of Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 10.4,11–12 Bardy; *Comm. Ps.* PG 24.65 C). In the Latin tradition the theme appears in Ambrose (cf. *De Helia et ieiunio* 20, 75), Jerome (cf. *Dial adv. Pel.* III, 11, PL 23.607 *ut morbum et vulnus in corpore ita peccatum in anima*) and is particularly significant in Augustine (e.g. *De docrina Christiana* 1.14,13, the wisdom of God: (*sapientia*) *ipsa medicus, ipsa medicina*; *Serm.* 87.10,13, PL 38.537–538, PL 38.539–540, PL 38.945). See R. Arbesmann, "The Concept of 'Christus Medicus' in St. Augustine", *Traditio* 10 (1954), pp. 1–28, S. Poque, *Le langage symbolique dans la prédication de St. Augustin* (Paris 1984), vol. 1, pp. 176–186, vol. 2, p. 115, and Straw (1988), p. 153 with n. 21 for further bibliography.

narrative the idea of *beholding* from *Numbers*. In the Old Testament, the man *looks* at the Serpent (ἰδών) and is healed. Likewise, the man in the words of the Johannine Jesus, who believes in the "new" Serpent and ἔχῃ ζωήν, is described by Nonnus as someone who *looks* at the peace of life, ζωῆς κυδιάνειραν ἐσαθρήσειε γαλήνην. This is a solemn representation of eternal life as "*the glorifying serenity of life*" and produces a notable oxymoron suggested by the contrast between the adjective and the noun it qualifies, since κυδιάνειρα, being a typical Homeric adjective of the battle,[146] bears overtones of tumult and is thus unexpected as an adjective of peacefulness. In this description, Nonnus combines John's statement about the believer's salvation with a reminiscence from the account of the *Numbers*, through the added idea of the saved person's *vision* of the Serpent. This vision was realised both back in Moses' times, as regards the "old" Serpent, made from bronze, and now, as regards the "new" Serpent, the crucified Christ. In this way, the parallelism between Moses' Serpent and Christ is highlighted and strengthened all the more.

As for the other terms that Nonnus employs, the adjective λυσίπονος is also related to the Serpent. As mentioned above,[147] Nonnus often associates the adjective with Dionysus sphere and the healing properties of the god of wine. Here Nonnus combines it with a metonymy (δρακοντείοιο προσώπου), which probably once again reflects the symbolic connotations associated with Dionysus combined with the Serpent as a symbol of Salvation, in an amalgam of Classical and Biblical tradition. The term ἄκανθα may indicate both the thorn and the spine. Such ambiguity is not coincidental, since we find only another three occurrences of the noun in the whole *Paraphrase*, one regarding the sterile inactivity of the Jews during the Sabbath[148] and two describing Christ's crown of thorns.[149] The latter image seems to be evoked by the present image. In the *Dionysiaca* ἄκανθα occurs frequently, indicating the spine of a serpent[150] and the serpent is actually also one of the metamorphic images of Dionysus.[151] In the *Paraphrase* the poet is suggesting a close parallel between

146 *Il.* 4.225, 6.124, 7.113, 8.448, 12.325, *al.* Only at *Il.* 1.490 the adjective qualifies ἀγορήν. In any case, the idea of intense movement and noise is always present.

147 See above, on *A. Periphrasis*.

148 *Par.* 5.61, on which see Agosti (2003), p. 415.

149 *Par.* 19.7 ὀξυτόμου δὲ κόρυμβα περιπλέξαντες ἀκάνθης and 19.22 καὶ στέφος ὀξυέθειρος ὁμόπλοκον εἶχεν ἀκάνθης.

150 For instance, 1.189, 4.317, 12.319, 15.86, *al.*

151 For example, at the beginning of the *Dionysiaca* (1.16), in introducing the subject of his poem, Nonnus evokes Dionysus in his serpentine aspect, as a δράκων. Cf. also the story about the resurrection of a snake as wrought on the shield of Dionysus (*Dion.* 25.451–552).

the spine of the "saviour" serpent and the Cross.[152] The adjective which qualifies it, δουράτεος,[153] also appears in the depiction of the Cross: in Book 19 not only is the Cross defined by the *synecdoche*, but another two phrases involving the idea of wood (the metaphorical "wooden death" and the "wooden bolds"), are employed to describe the Crucifixion.[154]

The final image which includes Time personified as a bearded man (εὐρυγένειος) who constantly revolves (ἑλίσσεται) occurs in both of Nonnus' poems[155] and is one of the many examples of the amalgamation of pagan imagery and Christian notions in the *Paraphrase*. This representation of time is well attested in ancient iconography, as documented by Levi, who discussed the third century mosaic in Antioch-on-the-Orontes, where a bearded Αἰών sitting on a *kline* is represented along with another three figures of *chronoi* (Past, Present and Future):[156] in the late syncretistic religions, the deity of Αἰών became connected with mystic cults, especially that of Mithras,[157] and its iconography is generally considered as an expression of Orphic ideas.[158] It is significant that in Book 7 of the *Dionysiaca*, Αἰών plays a crucial role as a divine entity. After the deluge, he acts as a mediator between mankind and Zeus and addresses a prayer to the god, asking him to save humanity by introducing the joys of wine. Thus Αἰών creates the conditions for the birth of the "second" Dionysus after the death of Zagreus.[159] In the whole of the *Paraphrase*, the idea of Time as a quasi-

152 In the light of the correspondences between Dionysus and Christ, one passage in particular seems to be relevant to this image: in the section concerning Ampelus' resurrection in the form of a grapevine, Nonnus recounts a more ancient version of the story, in which a prophetic snake, whose spine revolves, is described as sucking Dionysus' nectar and indicating the spot where the god should gather the must in order to create wine, *Dion.* 12.319 ἀμφὶ δέ μιν σκολιῇσι δράκων δινωτὸς ἀκάνθαις / λαρὸν ἐυρραθάμιγγος ἀμέλγετο νέκταρ ὀπώρης. On this passage, see Duc (1990), p. 187, Gigli Piccardi (2003), pp. 854–855.

153 In epic poetry it qualifies often the Wooden Horse, from Homer onwards. Apart from Nonnus' works, it appears, for instance, at *Od.* 8.493 and 512 (on the Wooden Horse), *h. Merc.* 121, Ap. Rh. 2.381, Triph. 344, 458 (on the Wooden Horse), Qu. Sm. 12.139 and 394, 13.40 (on the Wooden Horse), 6.108.

154 *Par.* 19.74 δουρατέου θανάτοιο ταθεὶς τετράζυγι δεσμῷ and 19.76 δούρασι γομφοτόμοισιν ἐγὼ γομφωτὸν ἐάσας / κοίρανον ὑμείων ὀλέσω, κτλ.

155 See also below, 3. *Imperishable* [continued]: *the Bread of Life, the True and Wise Bread*, discussing *Par.* 6.173–179.

156 See Levi (1944), esp. pp. 269–276.

157 Levi (1944), p. 291.

158 Levi (1944), p. 276.

159 On Αἰών and on the role of Dionysus as parallel to that of Christ, see Gigli Piccardi (2003), pp. 512–515 and Bowersock (1990), pp. 26–27 (as far as cult is concerned). On the cult of Αἰών, born from Kore, in Alexandria, see id., pp. 22–27.

personified figure occurs in a number of other passages[160] (though Time is depicted as a bearded figure only three times), representing a recurring pagan echo transposed into a Christian context, but as a whole devoid of its strong anthropomorphism in the *Dionysiaca*.[161]

To sum up, the paraphrast incorporates in his rendering important details taken from the account in *Numbers*, which is the basis for the Johannine passage reworked here. These details, absent from John, consist of the healing quality of the crucified Jesus and the salvation awaiting the person who gazes at the Cross, the context of the New Testament narrative altering the Old Testament elements. Nonnus employs epic vocabulary to add these details and uses the word τύπος to point directly at the Septuagint text to which John refers. Nonnus thus stresses his own role as an exegete, alerts the reader to the intertextuality, as it were, between the passage in *Numbers* and John's narrative and stresses the importance of his interpretative information, as he constantly strives to elevate his style. The details added by Nonnus and expressed in terms which also evoke Dionysian contexts enhance the visualisation of the Biblical scene and the vividness of the words of the Johannine Jesus.

D.2 *The Imperishable Abode*

In the following section of the Gospel, Jesus goes on to explain to Nicodemus that, through His Son, God offers the eternal life to the faithful:

***Par.* 3.80–86**	**John 3.16**
οὕτω γὰρ πολύμορφον ἐφίλατο κόσμον ἀλήτην	Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς
ὑψιμέδων σκηπτοῦχος, ὅτι χραισμήτορα φωτῶν	τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν
μουνογενῆ λόγον υἷα πόρεν τετράζυγι κόσμῳ,	τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα
ὄφρα μιν ὃς δέξοιτο μετάτροπον ἦθος ἀμείψας,	πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν

160 For instance, *Par.* 8.94, 9.154, 12.102, *al.* The personification is not always strong and explicit. Cf. the ambiguous state of A/αἰών at *Par.* 3.31, 3.169: see next note. On the representation of Time, see further Golega (1930), pp. 63–66; G. Zuntz, *Aion in der Literatur der Kaiserzeit* (Vienna 1992), esp. pp. 29–33 and 57–58. See also Spanoudakis (2016), pp. 610–611, and Lightfoot (2016), pp. 640–641.

161 As a bearded figure: *Par.* 3.79, 6.147, 6.178–179. Miguélez Cavero (2013b, pp. 354–355, 359) notes that Aion, among other cosmic divinities, replaces the Homeric deities of destiny in the *Dionysiaca*. As far as the *Paraphrase* is concerned, Lightfoot (2016, p. 641) underlines that Time has generally lost its pagan "humanistic" aspect and, being "reduced to a set of pictorial conventions, he is subordinated to God's time".

(*cont.*)

Par. **3.80–86**	**John 3.16**
πίστιν ἐς ἀστυφέλικτον ἑκούσιον αὐχένα κάμπτων, ζωῆς οὐρανίης αἰώνιον εἰς χορὸν ἔλθῃ ναίων ἄφθιτον οἶκον ἐν εὐδένδρῳ παραδείσῳ,	μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ’ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
For the scepter-bearer ruling on high so loved the polymorphous, erring world, that to be a protector of men He gave His only-begotten Son, the Word, to the four-yoked world, so that whoever received Him, turning around and changing his ways, bowing his willing neck to unshakeable faith, might come into the eternal chorus of heavenly life, inhabiting the indestructible abode in well-wooded paradise.	For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The re-elaboration on the model is here particularly evident, as Nonnus systematically inserts a number of elements that are not present in his model. The plain ὁ θεός is replaced by the image of a king ruling from above (ὑψιμέδων), linked to the Homeric adjective σκηπτοῦχος.[162] Although ὑψιμέδων is a frequent term for God in the *Paraphrase*,[163] only in the present passage is it accompanied by the adjective σκηπτοῦχος. Thus, divine majesty is strongly highlighted in visual terms, since God is represented as a sceptre-holding king in a lofty abode, high above mankind. These terms also recall the poet's elaborate description of God the Father and the Son-Logos in the beginning of the *Paraphrase*, highly important, as far as dogma is concerned: cf. the idea of eternal kingship through reference to God's throne at 1.4 ἀτέρμονι σύνθρονος ἕδρῃ,[164] the notion of the "high birth" of the Logos through ὑψιγένεθλος at 1.5[165] and the heavenly light in which divinity moves at 1.12.

162 *Il.* 1.279, 2.86, *Od.* 2.231, 5.9, *al.*

163 In the *Dionysiaca* it is attributed to Zeus and in the *Paraphrase* it is attributed to God (for instance, *Par.* 4.115, 5.86, 6.170, 8.20, 9.127, *al.*). See Agosti (2003), p. 451, on *Par.* 5.86, and Franchi (2013), p. 464, on *Par.* 6.170. The adjective is traditionally associated with Zeus (e. g. Hes. *Th.* 529). It refers to God in Greg. Naz. *AP* 8.5,1 εἷς θεὸς ὑψιμέδων. As Agosti pointed out, it became a usual epithet for God after Gregory of Nazianzus.

164 Taken up from the Constantinopolitan Creed; see further De Stefani (2002), p. 109.

165 Already compared by De Stefani (2002, p. 109), with the present ὑψιμέδων.

Such a picture invites a continuation of the cosmic imagery, necessarily realised through the insertion of an indirect object to the verb "he gave" (ἔδωκεν John, the epic πόρεν Nonnus), borrowed from the previous Johannine sentence: this indirect object is, of course, the "world", here conceived as fouryoked, or fourfold (τετράζυγι κόσμῳ). Τετράζυξ is well attested in both Nonnian works and alludes to the four elements of which the κόσμος consists, bearing philosophical overtones.[166] Interestingly, in the *Paraphrase* the formula τετράζυγι κόσμῳ occurs only once more, as a hexameter clausula, too, and in the same case, in a context similar to that of the present passage, where Jesus says that the Son is sent into the world by the Father (20.94). In his Christian poem Nonnus thus explicitly associates the Son's mission to the world with the depiction of the world from a philosophical-scientific point of view. Two lines earlier, the poet inserts the idea of a "wanderer" (ἀλήτην) world, the adjective ἀλήτης also possessing philosophical connotations, in that it refers to the instability and changeability of the world.[167] Thanks to these additions a vigorous image, much more memorable and visually impressive than the Johannine abstract "God", sharply sketches the universal power and authority of the Father. At the same time, the Son's mission to the world is presented in the light of its intense cosmic significance. Moreover, the Son, already defined as μονογενής in the *Vorlage*, receives a further theological attribute from Nonnus, who inserts the concept of Logos, thereby recalling the main theme of the first chapter of the Gospel of John. The rationality and supreme organisation by which the whole creation is administered through Λόγος, is famously elaborated by John in the opening words of his Gospel and is echoed here, too. This is achieved through the description of an accurately designed and ordered world in both passages. This world is in the hands of an ultimate authority who now sends to it His Son, who is therefore a king,

166 Frequently in the *Dionysiaca* (at 5.54, 5.161, 6.99, 41.278, related to κόσμος). In *Dion.* 7.6, it describes the creation of mankind from a mixture of the four elements (see Gigli Piccardi 2003, pp. 524–525); at *Dion.* 41.54, it again refers to creation and it conveys the same connotations. It draws on a Platonic theme at *Prot.* 320d, where Nature generates human beings by mixing together the four elements (see Accorinti, 2004, pp. 180–181). Before Nonnus, the adjective appears in *Strasbourg Cosmogony*, which has been dated by Gigli Piccardi (1990, p. 13) to the first half of the fifth century. On the cosmogonic implication of the term, see Gigli Piccardi (1990), pp. 99–102. See Preller (1918), p. 154, for an early and brief discussion of *Par.* 3.82. For possible Parmenidean echoes in Nonnus' use, see Floyd (2003), pp. 244–248. See also below, *H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, d. Details of the Crucifixion. Jesus and Peter.*

167 Κόσμος ἀλήτης: *Dion.* 1.399, 32.54, *Par.* 1.29, 3.80, 9.176, 14.105, 15.74. See further De Stefani (2002), p. 128 (on *Par.* 1.29).

too. The Son encompasses all divine reason and wisdom, as Nonnus tells us with the term λόγος here, echoing the reference to the creation of everything through λόγος, at the beginning of *Par.* 1.

L. 86 contains two additions that are not even hinted at in the Johannine text, both related to the concept of eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) of the Gospel text. These are the image of an imperishable (ἄφθιτον) mansion and an image of Paradise as a garden full of beautiful trees. The adjective ἄφθιτος, frequent in Homer, is once used to describe the house (δόμον) of Hephaestus.[168] This image is employed by Nonnus to describe the immortal mansion of the Christian God (see also below, discussion of *Par.* 6.173–179). A similar idea is found in a passage of the *Oracula Sibyllina*, where the same adjective is related to the noun οἶκος (although not in a *iunctura*).[169] The image of a garden with beautiful plants seems to be a Nonnian poetic insertion possibly echoing the Old Testament image of the Eden as the "garden of delight".[170] As has been observed, the term παράδεισος occurs surprisingly rarely in the New Testament[171] and there is no explicit description of a παράδεισος. The earliest sources to offer a description of Paradise as a terrestrial garden include Theophilus of Antioch,[172] Origen[173] and a sermon spuriously attributed to Basil.[174]

The adjective εὔδενδρος occurs in another two instances only in the *Paraphrase*, 6.10 and 12.55–65;[175] in the latter passage the crowd of the Jews cuts palm branches from a garden (κῆπος) to greet Christ in the context of the Baiophoros. The adjective stresses the idyllic quality of the vegetation and of the whole setting and enhances the messianic overtones of the present passage, as it also does in the context of the Baiophoros scene.[176]

168 *Il.* 18.369–370 Ἡφαίστου δ' ἵκανε δόμον Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα / ἄφθιτον ἀστερόεντα μεταπρεπέ' ἀθανάτοισι.

169 *Oracula Sibyllina* 5.401 *οἶκον* ἀεὶ θάλλοντα, θεοῦ τηρήμονα ναόν, ἐξ ἁγίων γεγαῶτα καὶ *ἄφθιτον* αἰὲν ἐόντα.

170 Cf. *Gen.* 3.24 καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὸν Αδαμ καὶ κατῴκισεν αὐτὸν ἀπέναντι τοῦ παραδείσου τῆς τρυφῆς.

171 Namely Luke 23.43; *Corinth.* 12.2; *Rev.* 2, 7. See Macaskill (2010), *passim.*

172 *Ad Autolycum* 2.24. See Daniélou (1953), pp. 442–443.

173 *Selecta in Numeros* PG 12.581,19–22, on which see Daniélou (1953), pp. 433 ff.

174 *Basile de Césarée, sur l'origine de l'homme* SC, 160 (Paris 1970), p. 242. See Maguire (1987), p. 366.

175 In the whole Nonnian corpus the adjective occurs six times (apart from the instances of the *Paraphrase*, just mentioned, also at *Dion.* 13.291, 27.145, 45.182).

176 See Franchi (2013), p. 292, on *Par.* 6.10 δι' εὐδένδροιο δὲ λόχμης. For the Baiophoros and for Nonnus' handling of the relevant imagery, see below, *4. a. Scenery and Setting: Christ's Entry to Jerusalem.*

D.3 *Imperishable (Continued): The Bread of Life, the True and Wise Bread*

In Book 6 the poet elaborates on the theme of heavenly bread, offering an example of a somewhat restricted use of verbal and synonymic accumulation, albeit still combined with independent Nonnian additions.

Par. 6.126–137	John 6.31–33
ἡμέτεροι γάρ αἰθέρος ἄφθιτον εἶδαρ ἐρημάδος ἔνδοθι πέτρης μάννα πολυκλήιστον ἐθοινήσαντο τοκῆες, γραπτὸς ἅπερ πέλε μῦθος· ἀμετρήτῳ ποτὲ λαῷ οὐρανόθεν πόρεν ἄρτον, ἀφειδέι δαιτυμονῆι. Ἰησοῦς δ' ὀάριζεν ἀγήνορα λαὸν ἐλέγχων· “Μωσῆς οὐ πάρος ὔμμιν ἐρημαίῃ παρὰ πέτρῃ αἰθέρος ἄρτον ὄπαζε μελίρρυτον εἰλαπινάζειν, ἀλλὰ πατὴρ ἐμὸς ἦεν, ὃς εἰσέτι φέρτερον ὑμῖν οὐρανόθεν σοφὸν ἄλλον ἐτήτυμον ἄρτον ὀπάσσει. Οὗτος γὰρ πέλεν ἄρτος, ὃς οὐρανόθεν καταβαίνων ζωὴν πασιμέλουσαν ὅλῳ δωρήσατο κόσμῳ”.	οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καθώς ἐστιν γεγραμμένον, **Ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν.** Εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν. Ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν ὁ καταβαίνων **ἐκ** τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ.
“For our forefathers, near the rocky desert, feasted on imperishable food from the aether, the celebrated manna, just as the word of scripture says: “Once to a countless multitude of lavish banqueters He gave bread from heaven' ”. Jesus, reproaching the proud people, said kindly: “Moses was not the one who, in the past, by the rocky desert, gave the honey-flowing bread from the aether to feast on, but it was my Father, who yet shall grant you another, better, wise, and true bread from heaven. For the bread is He who, descending from heaven, bestowed life dear to all on the whole world”.	“Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat' ”. Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world”.

After the miracle on lake Tiberias, Jesus speaks to the crowd about the "Bread of Life", and mentions the episode of the provision of the manna by God, as described in the *Book of Numbers* 11.1–14 and *Exodus* 16.14, where the Gospel miracle is prefigured.[177] Nonnus eagerly supplies the reader with a number of additional details not mentioned in the Gospel. Although the episodes, as illustrated in the Old Testament, are the basis of the description, Nonnus' re-elaboration does not directly depend lexically on the Biblical text. The Biblical quotation contained in the Gospel (ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν, *Ps*. 78.24) is still recognisable (οὐρανόθεν πόρεν ἄρτον), though slightly modified.

In this instance, *amplificatio* is employed to a limited degree. The proportion between the Gospel verses and the paraphrased text is almost the same. Furthermore, in this passage, Nonnus' usual reluctance to use repetitions (with the exception of his emphatic *anaphorae*)[178] is absent: in ten lines the term ἄρτος occurs five times, while it is repeated four times in the Gospel. The repetitive and deliberate emphasis on the bread of heaven is so great that it becomes a *Leitmotiv*. Notably, Nonnus uses the synonym εἶδαρ only once and the verb ὀπάζω appears twice in relation with the same noun, ἄρτος. The adverb οὐρανόθεν, replacing ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, is also repeated three times.

On the other hand, Nonnus adds a number of synonyms and rhetorical devices along with some new details. The initial line (126) opens with a strong *hyperbaton* (ἡμέτεροι—τοκῆες in l. 128). At l. 127 a piece of information concerning the setting of the scene is given: ἐρημάδος ἔνδοθι πέτρης, which is repeated, in *variatio*, in l. 132: ἐρημαίῃ παρὰ πέτρῃ. The term μάννα (128) is joined to the Nonnian coinage πολυκλήιστον.[179] The genitive αἰθέρος (l. 127) describes the bread as coming from heaven and creates a brief alliteration with the adjective ἄφθιτος (referring to εἶδαρ), which follows it and underlines the divine origin of the bread and its eternal essence. This adjective occurs five times in the *Paraphrase*: in Book 3, where it describes the eternal mansion of Paradise (3.86, discussed in the previous section), at 14.35, where it is used of the eternal Father, and three times in Book 6, where it qualifies the Biblical manna (6.127) and the Bread of Life (6.147 and 173, discussed below). Although ἄφθιτος is employed for both concepts, in Nonnus' interpretation of the Gospel a stronger contrast

177 Commentators have noted a number of correspondences between the Old Testament and the Gospel episodes: the typology of Moses is clearly present in the Johannine text and the similarities concern the fact that Jesus crosses the Sea of Tiberias to escape persecutors as Moses crossed the Red Sea in order to escape the Egyptians. In both miracles the food is not just sufficient but enough to spare. See Wiles (1960), p. 54.

178 See above, *B. Synonymic Amplificatio and Verbal / Adjectival Accumulation, 2. Anaphora*.

179 Occurring twice in *Dionysiaca* (9.132, 28.77) and three times in the *Paraphrase* (6.128, 9.156, 11.223).

between the Biblical manna and the Bread of Life is suggested, as true spiritual nourishment is represented *par excellence* by the body of Christ in the Eucharist.[180]

The genitive αἰθέρος occurs again in l. 133, again in relation to bread and forming a brief alliteration. The noun ἄρτον is in this case joined with the adjective μελίρρυτον ("flowing with / like honey"), honey being characteristically associated with Golden Age imagery depicting ideal places.[181] The *hypallage* in the expression ἀφειδέι δαιτυμονῆι (131) is also striking. In the final part of the passage (135), Nonnus uses the poetic adjective ἐτήτυμος to describe the bread as "true", as in the Gospel, but also as "wise" (σοφὸν ἄλλον ἐτήτυμον). The poetic adjective ἐτήτυμος[182] consistently replaces the Johannine ἀληθής / ἀληθινός in the Nonnian rephrasing,[183] joined to the attribute σοφός. Σοφός creates a metaphorical figure (a form of *hypallage*, since wisdom should refer to the Logos), in that it associates divine wisdom with the true heavenly bread and alludes to the body of Christ and its real presence in the Communion. This idea seems to be emphasised by Nonnus' addition of the adjective ἐτήτυμον. The poet underlines the point that the Father now offers another type of bread, represented by His own Son. The adjective σοφός, applied to concrete objects, has significant parallels in the *Paraphrase*, as Caprara notes:[184] in the dialogue between Christ and the Samaritan woman, the "water of Life"[185] is described as "wise water" (*Par.* 4.48 ζωὸν ὕδωρ, καὶ τοῦτο *σοφὸν ποτὸν* εἶχεν ὀπάσσαι). In this case, as in the case of the "wise bread", σοφός relates to the faculty of communicating divine wisdom. Nonnus inserts the word and employs it in such a fashion that he seems to be working here in the Neoplatonic tradition, in which σοφός is used to denote the idea of the breathing of divine wisdom into inanimate objects.[186] The personification of Wisdom who exhorts men to eat her bread and drink

180 See Franchi (2013), p. 118. For the body of Christ in the Eucharist in Book 6 of John, see further below, *H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, d. Details of the Crucifixion. Jesus and Peter*, end of section.

181 See Franchi (2013), p. 422.

182 Frequent in epic poetry. For instance, *Il.* 22.438, *Od.* 3.241, 23.62, *al.*; Hes. *Op.* 10, Pind. *O.* 10(11).54.

183 For instance, *Par.* 1.24 and 189, 3.160, 5.123 and 126; 7.165, 19.184. The adjective is also frequently used to describe the voice / word / testimony of the Lord as "true": for instance, *Par.* 3.53, 4.174, 4.198, *al.*

184 Caprara (2005), p. 183, mentions namely this passage and another two lines of the *Paraphrase*: 3.114 γαίης αἰόλα φῦλα σοφῷ βαπτίζε ῥεέθρῳ, about the baptism, and 19.195 ἐκ στόματος ζαθέοιο σοφὸν γάλα πιστὸν ἀμέλγων, about Jesus' teaching.

185 For the spiritual implications of the "Living Water", see Franchi (2017). See also Cutino (2009), p. 234, and Lightfoot (2017), pp. 150–151.

186 Caprara (2005), p. 181. See also id. (2008), p. 63 and *passim*, on the "wise wine".

her wine is also a Biblical image (*Prov.* 9.5), which lies behind the Johannine verses and alludes to the wisdom of Christ-Logos.

The theme of heavenly bread is developed in the following passage from the same book:

***Par.* 6.173–179**	**John 6.58**
ζωῆς ἄφθιτος ἄρτος ἐτήτυμος οὗτος ἀκούει, οὐχ οἷον τὸ πάροιθεν ἐρημαίῃ παρὰ λόχμῃ ὑμέτεροι γλυκὺν ἄρτον ἐθοινήσαντο τοκῆες καὶ θάνον ἐν σκοπέλοισιν ὀριπλανέες μετανάσται. Τοῦτον ἀνὴρ ἐπάρουρος ἐτήτυμον ἄρτον ἐρέπτων ζωὴν ὄψεται οὗτος, ἕως δολιχοῖο γενείου ἀμφιλαφὴς πολιῇσι κόμην λευκαίνεται Αἰών.	οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, οὐ καθὼς ἔφαγον οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἀπέθανον. Ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
This is called the true, imperishable bread of life; it is not like the sweet bread, which in the past, in the deserted copse, your forefathers ate and died among the mountain peeks, wandering migrants. The soil-bound man who feeds on this true bread shall see life until enormous Aion's long beard is whitened with grey hairs.	This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.

As in the previous case, Nonnus does not avoid repetitions, in that the noun ἄρτος recurs more often than in the correspondent Gospel section and is linked with a number of elements not to be found in the Johannine text. The poet introduces again the same adjectives, ἄφθιτος and ἐτήτυμος, which characterise the bread as true and imperishable, and present manna as a prefiguration of the Bread of Life (*Par.* 6.127–135). In this instance, too, the poet provides the reader with an additional detail concerning the setting of the scene (ἐρημαίῃ παρὰ λόχμῃ), which is not present in his model and repeats almost exactly the second hemistich of line 132 (ἐρημαίῃ παρὰ πέτρῃ). The reference to the Bread of Life in l. 174 is more explicit than in the corresponding Gospel verse. Here Nonnus seems to be echoing John 6.35 and 48, where it is clearly stated ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς. On the other hand, he does not elaborate on the expression ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, which is, in fact omitted. In this context, the adjectives refer to the eternal and true bread represented by the body of Christ (the adjective γλυκύς being a further addition) and it is especially in the notion of incorruptibility

of the heavenly Bread that the influence of Cyril's comment is visible, as pointed out by Franchi.[187] Another exegetical passage which deals with the topic is Eusebius' *De eccl. Theol.* 1.20,32–33 Hansen-Klostermann,[188] in which the idea of the incorruptible divine Bread, the Son, is associated with the pre-existence for the world of the Son who, as imperishable Bread, fed the divine powers there.[189] It is worth noting that in *Par.* 6.140 ἐτήτυμος also qualifies the Bread of Life, which is defined as ἄφθιτος three lines below, in 6.143.[190] At ll. 146–147, Nonnus inserts the image of the bearded Aion, to convey the idea of eternity.[191] In the present passage, too, the themes of incorruptibility, truth and eternity appear to be interwoven together to illustrate the meaning of the Eucharist.

The concept of the eternal life is decisively confirmed once again in the Nonnian insertion of the personification of Time at ll. 178–179, where he is depicted as a bearded old man.[192] These two verses echo Theocr. 14.70, as the reference to γένυ and λευκαίνω with 'time' as its subject suggest: Theocr. 14.68–70 *ἀπὸ κροτάφων πελόμεσθα / πάντες γηραλέοι, καὶ ἐπισχερὼ ἐς γένυν ἕρπει / λευκαίνων ὁ χρόνος* (*we're all growing gray from the temples, and the snows of time creep down the cheek-bone hair by hair*).[193] Theocritus is here expressing the idea that the signs of ageing in human beings (the white hair Time makes them produce) spread gradually from the temples to the cheeks.[194] Turning the active λευκαίνων into the passive λευκαίνεται, Nonnus reverses this idea, making Time itself "grow white", hence old, in a rhetorical *adynaton*. This exaggerative paradox stresses even more emphatically the notion of the eternal happiness of the believers,

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187 Franchi (2013), p. 467. Cf. Cyril, *Jo.* 1.458,23–25 Pusey αὐτός (sc. Christ-Bread) διὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐνεργείας τὸ πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν, καὶ οὐ μέχρι τούτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα συνέχων εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν (*he, through the operation of the Spirit, gives life to the spirit, and not only that, but he preserves the body itself in incorruption*).

188 G.C. Hansen, E. Klostermann, *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 4 (Berlin 1972^2).

189 The passage is discussed by Pollard (1970, p. 270).

190 See Franchi (2013), pp. 431–434.

191 Οὔποτε διψήσειεν, ἕως ἔτι καμπύλος ἕρπων / αἰὼν εὐρυγένειος ἀτέρμονα νύσσαν ἀμείβει ([*whoever*] … *shall never thirst for as long as, moving slowly, the curved, / broad-bearded Aion passes eternally by the turning-post*).

192 On Nonnus' Time metaphors (although this specific one is not mentioned), see Gigli Piccardi (1985), pp. 112–120. For the *Dionysiaca*, see also the discussion of Miguélez Cavero (2013b), pp. 353–355. For the representation of Time in Nonnus and its significance, see further above, *1. The Raised Serpent, The (healing) Saviour, Eternity*, end of section.

193 Translation of Gow (1952, vol. 1, p. 107).

194 For further Greek passages on this feature, see Gow (1952), vol. 2, pp. 260–261. The verb ἕρπω in Theocritus suggests the idea of this slow, yet steady, process by which time "whitens" people's faces. Ἕρπω is not used in the passage from Nonnus in question, although it is repeatedly associated with χρόνος, which Nonnus consistently uses to indicate the "flow" of time.

since the new life will be such that the natural laws will be overturned and nothing and no one will get old or decline in any way.

D.4 *Presentation of Christ in Danger and in Suffering as King*

Nonnus' diction, as he depicts the soldiers' actions during Jesus' arrest and their behaviour towards Him afterwards, stresses precisely the fact that Jesus is a king. This is alluded to in the Gospel and Nonnus elaborates on it by inserting additional elements which specifically pertain to the presentation of imperial power.

In his account of Jesus' arrest, Nonnus does not merely insert images and rhetorical figures that are independent of the Gospel account. He also intervenes in the structure of the Johannine narrative and the resulting re-elaboration of the *Vorlage* strongly emphasises Christ's royal nature:[195]

Par. **18.34–39**	**John 18.6**
καὶ ὡς ἐφθέγξατο λαῷ ἀβροχίτων, ἀσίδηρος ἄναξ ῥηξήνορι φωνῇ· "Ναζαρὲθ ναέτης τελέθω Γαλιλαῖος Ἰησοῦς"· πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιῶται αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες ἐπεστόρνυντο κονίῃ πρηνέες, οἰστρηθέντες ἀτευχέι λαίλαπι φωνῆς. And when the Lord, wearing no armor and bearing no sword, said to that multitude with voice that broke the ranks of men: "I am Jesus of Galilee, the inhabitant of Nazareth", all those soldiers armed for war fell one on top of the other of their own accord, and lay strewn on the dust face down, driven mad by the furious storm of His unarmed voice.	ὡς οὖν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἐγώ εἰμι, ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἔπεσαν χαμαί. When Jesus said to them, "I am he", they drew back and fell to the ground.

Nonnus' rephrasing of the Gospel verse stresses the contrast between Christ, who is not armed, and the armed surrounding crowd (μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιῶται). Gigli Piccardi has suggested that the scene mirrors the arrest of Dionysus in the

195 As Livrea 1989 points out, p. 126: "(…) per esaltare la divina maestà del Cristo anche attraverso una scelta del taglio narrativo divergente da quella evangelica".

Dionysiaca:[196] more specifically, Pentheus' servants are "enslaved by divine constraint"[197] in similar fashion to what happens in the Christian context, in which the soldiers prostrate themselves before the Lord. The description of Jesus' tunic as "soft" and the reference to the absence of weapons (*ἁβροχίτων*, *ἀσίδηρος ἄναξ*; note the assonance of α) emphasises Christ's vulnerability, although Nonnus eventually reverses this idea by giving prominence to the key-term ἄναξ. Its metrical position, exactly in the middle between two *caesurae*, helps emphasise the word.[198] Ἀσίδηρος ἄναξ ῥηξήνορι φωνῇ presents a strong alliteration of the sibilants σ and ξ, which suggests the description of Jesus' voice almost as a weapon, loud and powerful. Paradoxically, Jesus' supposed weakness becomes strength.[199]

The impact of the words of the unarmed (ἀτευχέι) Christ is comparable to the force of a hurricane. This is one more paradox, which emphasises Jesus' kingship and creates a powerful visual effect, in accordance with the principle of *enargeia*.[200] The last lines of the passage represent Christ as triumphant over the hostile crowd approaching in threatening fashion. Nonnus makes one more addition to the plain Johannine assertion ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἔπεσαν χαμαί. He depicts the soldiers prostrating themselves face down (*Par.* 18.39 πρηνέες). This detail recurs in Book 19, where the royal authority of Jesus is developed in the description of the flagellation:

***Par.* 19.4–14**	**John 19.1–3**
ἀμοιβαίῃσι δὲ ῥιπαῖς	τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλᾶτος
ῥιγεδανῇ Χριστοῖο δέμας φοίνιξεν ἱμάσθλῃ.	τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐμαστί-
Καὶ στρατὸς ἀντιβίων φιλοκέρτομος εἶχεν Ἰησοῦν·	γωσεν. Καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται
ὀξυτόμου δὲ κόρυμβα περιπλέξαντες ἀκάνθης	πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ
στέμμα νόθον βασιλῆος ἐκυκλώσαντο καρήνῳ·	ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ

196 *Dion.* 45.228 ff. See Gigli Piccardi (1984), esp. 251–253, Livrea (1989), comment on l. 35, pp. 128–129.

197 *Dion.* 45.237–237 ἀίξας ἀκίχητος, ἐν ἀφθόγγῳ δὲ σιωπῇ / δαιμονίῃ θεράποντες ἐδουλώθησαν ἀνάγκῃ.

198 The placement of ἄναξ at the same *sedes* is also accompanied by assonance of α in *Par.* 11.148. See Accorinti (1996), p. 429.

199 Livrea (1989, p. 129) referring to the voice: "Questa sgradevolezza, che corrisponde al carattere trionfalistico della cristologia di Doroteo è appena temperata dallo strano e falloso *hapax*: solo Cristo può essere aspramente punitivo e dolcemente vivificante a un tempo".

200 For *enargeia*, see further above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

(*cont.*)

Par. **19.4–14**	**John 19.1–3**
καί μιν ἀνεχλαίνωσαν ἐπὶ χροΐ πέπλα βαλόντες Σιδονίης στίλβοντα σοφῷ σπινθῆρι θαλάσσης, σύμβολα κοιρανίης καὶ ἐν ἄλγεσιν· ἀμφιπαγῆ δὲ γούνατα δοχμώσαντες ἐπὶ χθονὸς αὐχένι κυρτῷ [κοίρανον ἠσπάζοντο ἐῇ ψευδήμονι κλήσει] ἱκεσίης κήρυκι.	τῇ κεφαλῇ, καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτόν, καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἔλεγον, Χαῖρε, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.
while with alternating lunges the body of Christ he made blood-red by the dreadful scourge. And the hostile army of jeering men held Jesus. The men, weaving into a circle the clusters of sharp-cutting thorns, placed the makeshift royal crown around His head, and cloaked Him from top to toe, casting upon His body robes shining with the subtle sparks of the Sidonian sea, symbols of kingship even in the midst of suffering. And with their knees bent and planted firmly on the ground, with bowed neck they saluted Him as Lord, calling Him by a mendacious name, which was, however, the herald of supplication.	Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews”!

In his comment on the scene describing Jesus’ arrest, Livrea pointed out that the soldiers’ behaviour before Christ (*Par.* 18.37–38 αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες ἐπεστόρνυντο κονίῃ / πρηνέες) echoes the gesture of προσκύνησις, “obeisance”,[201] performed in front of emperors or deities in the Greco-Roman world, but only addressed to God in Judaism.[202] Nonnus inserts the idea of a προσκύνησις,

201 Livrea (1989), p. 131 (comment on l. 38 πρηνέες) points out that Nonnus alters the situation, transforming the Johannine soldiers’ “defeat” during Jesus’ arrest, into an impressive gesture of submission. See also Livrea (1989), comment on l. 37, pp. 130–131. Livrea notes, *inter alia*, that the scene recalls *Dion.* 32.232–233.

202 Prostration before kings in the Greek (from Alexander onwards) and Roman world was a practice occasionally performed, although *adoratio* was mainly addressed to deities. The Jews reserved it only for God. It is often mentioned in the Gospels, in the context of worship of the one God and also as addressed to Jesus (for instance, Mat. 2.11 [baby Jesus adored as a king by the Magi], 8.2, 9.18, 15.25 [people revering Jesus with requests for heal-

although this seems to disagree with what is actually described in John, since those who fall backwards cannot be said to be πρηνέες.[203] Once again in *Par.* 19.11–12 the soldiers are depicted as ἀμφιπαγῆ δὲ γούνατα δοχμώσαντες ἐπὶ χθονός, and so are again performing προσκύνησις. Nonnus adds this detail, clearly having in mind the account in the Synoptics: Mat. 27.29 καὶ γονυπετήσαντες ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ ἐνέπαιξαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες, Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Mark 15.19 καὶ τιθέντες τὰ γόνατα προσεκύνουν αὐτῷ.[204] John does not mention the soldiers' (mocking) prostration. Even though the soldiers' genuflections are intended to parody the homage due to a king,[205] the phrase αὐχένι κυρτῷ … ἱκεσίης κήρυκι, in *hypallage*, suggests that the soldiers are in reality, albeit unconsciously, paying tribute to Jesus. Their bowed heads constitute a "witness of prayer", thus anticipating Christ's triumph. The scene serves to reaffirm the Christian paradox whereby the kingship of the Lord is asserted and magnified by the Passion.

In Nonnus' rephrasing of the Johannine verses the theme of Christ's royal status is largely developed through the persistence on the imagery of the purple.[206] The starting point is verse 2 of the Gospel, where it is concisely reported that Jesus was whipped. The verb ἐμαστίγωσεν becomes φοίνιξεν, thus introducing the image of the purple, which is explicitly mentioned only in verse three, where it is stated that a purple tunic was wrapped around Jesus' body: ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτόν. To amplify the concept, Nonnus offers an alliterative *periphrasis* that depicts the purple as a symbol of royal power: *Σιδονίης* στίλβοντα σοφῷ σπινθῆρι θαλάσσης σύμβολα κοιρανίης. The participle στίλβοντα recalls Mark 9.3, where Christ's clothes are described as στίλβοντα in the context of the Transfiguration (καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο στίλβοντα λευκὰ λίαν οἷα γναφεὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐ δύναται οὕτως λευκᾶναι).[207] The expression is followed

ing], John 9.38 [the man born blind rendering *proskynesis* to Jesus, after his healing]). See further Fletcher-Louis (2015), pp. 19–20, Naiden (2006), pp. 236–240.

203 Livrea (1989), p. 131 (comment to l. 38 πρηνέες). Earlier, Preller (1918, p. 93) had also noticed this contradiction.

204 *And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews"!* and *and kneeling down in homage to him*, respectively.

205 There are a few more examples of similar mockery on the part of non-Jews of Jews, as they are narrated in authors such as Josephus (*Ant.* 19.356–359) and Philo (*Flacc.* 36–39). See Luz (2005), p. 513. Luz holds that the agents of the mockery were inspired by the very popular theatrical genre of mime.

206 For the aristocratic or royal connotations of purple from Hellenistic times onwards, see Reinhold (1970), pp. 29–73. Purple indicated luxury also suitable for dedications to gods in the pre-Hellenistic Greek world; see id. 27–28.

207 *And his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.*

by a short statement, καὶ ἐν ἄλγεσιν, which plays a crucial role, in that it stresses that Christ's kingly nature is even greater during His suffering, thereby emphasising the importance of the Passion.[208]

It is noteworthy that the motif of the royal purple is also relevant to the Nonnian depiction of Dionysus as a king in the *Dionysiaca*[209] and that correspondences between the figures of Christ and Dionysus are numerous and widely commented upon.[210] In this respect, it is worth mentioning that the tunic of Jesus is defined with a typical Dionysian[211] adjective in *Par.* 19.123 οἴνοπα μὴ σχίζοιμεν ἀήθεα τόνδε χιτῶνα (*let us not tear this unwonted, wine-dark, divine tunic*, which renders a short segment of John 19.24 μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν, *let us not tear it*). The theme of the imperial purple is further expanded in the Nonnian rendering of John 19.5.[212] This is particularly significant because in this context the colour purple is tied to the figure of Pilate, the official representative of imperial authority. Elaborating on the Johannine phrase πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον, Nonnus offers an image of the shell that produces the purple, which is juxtaposed to the term "blood": *Par.* 19.22 πορφυρέην τ' ἐσθῆτα διάβροχον αἵματι κόχλου, alluding to the Passion of Christ. It has been observed that the chromatic details referring to the purple in the Nonnian depiction of the Passion evoke the meta-

208 On Christ's kingly aspect which recalls imperial ceremonial and on the motif of the royal purple in Book 19, see De Stefani (2002), p. 24: "L'autore assegna al Cristo l'appellativo di κοίρανος. Questo [...] si accorda con la tendenza a caratterizzare il Redentore con tratti che richiamano la pompa e il fasto del cerimoniale imperiale, come l'insistenza sulla porpora nel canto diciannovesimo, che stride e contrasta con l'immagine del Cristo sofferente".

209 In Athenaeus (5.197c, e, f; 198 a; 200 e), the famous Dionysian procession in Alexandria is described in detail, with the statue of Dionysus dressed in purple and the participants wearing purple tunics (see Reinhold 1970, p. 32). De Stefani (2002, p. 24, n. 82) points out that Dionysus' footwear is crimson (*Dion.* 14.237), as is that of the Roman Emperors. On *Dion.* 14.237, see Gonnelli (2003), pp. 150–151.

210 On similarities between the scene of Christ's arrest and the episode of Dionysus' capture in Euripides' *Bacchae*, see Tissoni (1998), pp. 67–68. For other *loci* where Christ and Dionysus and their respective environments are described in similar terms, see Tissoni (1998), pp. 74–79. For the analogy and contrast between Dionysus and Christ in the *Bacchae* according to Clemens of Alexandria in his *Protrepticus* and for Clemens' overall reading of the Euripidean play, see Massa (2014), pp. 167–184.

211 For instance, the adjective refers to Methe's cheeks at *Dion.* 18.342: ἔμφυτον οἰνωπῆσι παρηίσι πορφύρεον πῦρ; it describes the wine drunk by the serpent at 12.325 οἰνωπῇ ῥαθάμιγγι πεφυρμένον ἀνθερεῶνα; it is attributed to the flow of the river Hydaspes at 25.285: οἰνωπὰς ῥαθάμιγγας ἀνωΐχθησαν ὀπωπαί.

212 John 19.5: ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξω, φορῶν τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον καὶ τὸ πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον. Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος (*So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"*).

phor of Christ's blood as purple ink.[213] It has been also argued that the two images, that of the royal purple robe and that of Jesus' own body, streaked by the flagellation, are deliberately blurred by the poet in his picture of suffering Christ.[214]

In this section, we have investigated a selection of Nonnian passages which develop Johannine images and descriptions with regard to the poet's models, ways of expression and the ideas that emerge from his verses. The descriptions examined are related to various functions and presentations of Christ and exploit either real or allegorical images in the Gospel text. The Passion and the Crucifixion are powerful images, in the context of which Nonnus expounds the metaphorical significance of the Old Testament symbol of the raised Serpent, which stands for the Cross (*Par.* 3.71–79), and the apparently paradoxical regal aspect of Jesus in the episodes of His arrest and flagellation (*Par.* 18.34–38 and 19.4–11). In his elaboration on the motif of the Serpent, Nonnus further inserts the notion of Christ as Saviour of humanity in virtue of His functions as physician and healer, ideas drawn from early Christian tradition. Nonnus exploits the pagan motif of Aion in the context of the Serpent imagery (*Par.* 3.79) to elaborate the idea of eternal life that believers acquire through Christ's sacrifice. Variations on the same theme recur through the depiction of Paradise as the imperishable abode (*Par.* 3.80–86) and of the Bread of Life (*Par.* 6.126–137 and 173–179), patterns for the development of which Nonnus expands on the notion of Christ's gift of life to humanity and on the Euchaistic aspect of Christ's body-Bread of Life. In the final part of the latter passage (*Par.* 6.178–179), the pagan motif of Aion once more serves the concept of the eternity of life through the acceptance of God's offer: the eating of the crucified Son's flesh.

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213 Discussing the Nonnian depiction of the flagellation, Accorinti (1996, p. 34) associates Christ's blood with the purple ink used by the Emperors "[…] non si può certo tralasciare di accennare alla metafora protobizantina del sangue di Cristo *purpureo inchiostro* e del Suo corpo flagellato χάρτης del papiro, che mi sembra riflessa nelle notazioni cromatiche della Passione nonniana". On the theme of the purple ink, see also Agosti (2004), pp. 21–22. In the *Dionysiaca*, royal ink produces a script described as γράμματι φοινικόεντι (41.352; cf. Chuvin and Fayant 2006, p. 169 [comment ad loc.]).

214 See Hadjittofi (2018), p. 168 and *passim*. Hadjittofi emphasises the ambiguity created by the idea of ποικιλόνωτος ἀνήρ, which points to Christ's body as an allegory for a (royal) garment. Such a connection suggests the notion that man's body can be seen as a piece of clothing covering the soul. See also below, *E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 5. Mary of Magdala meets the Resurrected Christ*, end of section.

E "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound

This section deals with selected passages from the *Paraphrase* in which Nonnus adds vivacity and picturesque elements to the Johannine descriptions of persons and landscapes by means of short *ekphrases*, through the description of voices and through the presentation of bodily movement in graphic detail. Thus, such scenes acquire a kind of theatricality, in that they are now enacted much more vividly, and pictures and sounds are more intensively evoked in the reader's imagination, in comparison to the Gospel model. This revival of the original results from the application of an aspect of the principle of *enargeia*.[215] The descriptions of the Baptist and of the persons involved in the episode in which the recovery of the sick boy is announced to his father and the narratives of Lazarus' resurrection and of the meeting between Mary Magdalene and the resurrected Christ are presented in realistic detail as regards clothing, movement and voice. At the same time, theologically significant additions are made and echoes of literary motifs are constantly and predictably heard. Thus it is not surprising that the examples discussed here, in which theatricality and visual power prevail, share some features with the examples discussed above, in *D. Imagery with Theological Significance*. The accounts of the Entry into Jerusalem and of the episode in the Garden of Gethsemane, in which Jesus was arrested, are full of pleasing descriptions of nature and its rich flora. They also depict the persons' movements and other images which compose dramatic tableaux and, especially in the case of Jesus' arrest, create the impression of scenes from a tragedy.

E.1 *Description of John the Baptist and His Baptism*

In Book 3, Nonnus' elaboration of the scene of the Gospel depicts the disciples of John the Baptist, who tell him that Christ is baptising the faithful in the Jordan:

***Par.* 3.127–136**	**John 3.26**
ἐπειγομένῳ δὲ πεδίλῳ	καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην
ἦλθον ἐς ἀνέρα θεῖον, ἐμειλίξαντο δὲ μύθῳ	καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ῥαββί, ὃς ἦν
λεπτοφυεῖ λασίῳ πεπυκασμένον ἄνδρα χιτῶνι·	μετὰ σοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου,

215 For which see above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

(*cont.*)

***Par.* 3.127–136**	**John 3.26**
“ῥαββίν, ἀλεξικάκων ὑδάτων πρωτόθροε κῆρυξ, ὅστις ἔην μετὰ σεῖο πέρην ποταμοῖο ῥοάων, ὃν σὺ θεοῦ γεγαῶτα σοφῷ πιστώσαο μύθῳ, οὗτος ἔχων μίμημα τεοῦ καθαροῖο λοετροῦ βαπτίζει πολὺ μᾶλλον· ὁμοζήλῳ δὲ μενοινῇ συμμιγέες νεφεληδὸν ὅλοι σπεύδουσι πολῖται ἱέμενοι κείνοιο τυχεῖν θείοιο λοετροῦ”.	ᾧ σὺ μεμαρτύρηκας, ἴδε οὗτος βαπτίζει καὶ πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτόν.
On urgent sandal they came to the divine man, and implored in words the man covered in a threshed, shaggy tunic: “Rabbi, first-speaking herald of evil-averting waters, He who was with you across the river’s streams, whom you have pledged with wise word to be born of God, He, imitating your cleansing bath, baptizes much more; and with the same zeal in their desire all the citizens together like a cloud hurry on their way to meet with His divine bath”.	And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him”.

The passage offers an example of an extensive case of *amplificatio*: ten lines for only one Gospel verse. In ll. 127–128 Nonnus inserts elements independent of the Johannine text. At the start, Nonnus creates a lexical antithesis, intensively emphasised by the juxtaposition of the opposite terms, which are, moreover, in the same case (λεπτοφυεῖ λασίῳ), the two adjectives certainly qualifying different nouns but still forming a (pseudo-)paradox due to their position. The words of John’s disciples are defined as “light” (λεπτοφυεῖ, in enjambment) and the Baptist’s appearance is presented as “thick”: his mantle is “dense” and “woolly” (λασίῳ)[216] and the man is “thickly covered” with it (πεπυκασμένον). The adjective λεπτοφυής, placed in apposition to the “words” (μύθῳ), is a metaphor drawn from weaving, chosen so as to accord with the tone of the rest of the narrative and introduce the idea of clothing that stresses the Baptist’s simple and rough appearance. In fact, the brief but characteristic description of the

216 Λάσιος χιτών occurring also in descriptions in the *Dionysiaca*: 26.252, 27.293, 45.301, 46.277.

Baptist's clothes forms a very short and condensed *ekphrasis*, which enhances the *enargeia* present in any case in accounts that create images in the reader's mind.[217]

A slightly more detailed description of textile in the *Paraphrase* concerns another piece of simple and primitive cloth: Peter's ἐπενδύτης, the garment which Peter, who is fishing, hastily wraps around himself to come ashore and meet the resurrected Christ (John 21.7) in *Par.* 21.38–42.[218] The description of the Baptist, who wears a tunic made of hair, is most probably influenced by the Synoptics, since he is depicted as wearing a cloth made specifically of camel hair in Matthew 3.4 and Mark 1.6.[219] The description of John in the Synoptics is probably influenced by the description of Elias in *2Reg.* 1.8, where the prophet is ἀνὴρ δασὺς καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περιεζωσμένος τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ (*he wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist*).[220] Similarly, as has been pointed out by De Stefani,[221] the occurrence of the term κῆρυξ in Nonnus is also probably suggested by the Synoptics, where the Baptist is described as "heralding" the baptism (Mark 1.4, Mat. 3.1). Interestingly, Nonnus' λάσιος in the phase λασίῳ … χιτῶνι for John's garment recalls the Septuagint's adjective δασύς which renders the clothing of Elias, the probable model for John's description in Matthew and Mark; whether this is a deliberate Nonnian acknowledgment of the ultimate Biblical model for John's account remains open to conjecture. In any case, the animal skin of John is also a distinctive feature of his in the iconography.[222] These details of John's clothing, in addition

217 See above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

218 Discussed in Ypsilanti (2016), p. 221. Jesus' ἄρραφος χτών (John 19.23~*Par.* 19.118–121) is described in terms very close to the original and the *amplificatio* does not result in any new imagery there.

219 Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης εἶχεν τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ (*now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist*), καὶ ἦν ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐνδεδυμένος τρίχας καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ (*now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist*) respectively. See Rotondo (2014), pp. 605–606.

220 See Rotondo (2014), pp. 605–606.

221 De Stefani (2002), p. 119.

222 The simpleness and lack of sophistication of John's clothing is a commonplace in early art. For early depictions, see Baldwin Smith (1918), pp. 71–84, Jensen (2000), p. 176. John's mantle is shown as a short, rough cloth, possibly representing an animal skin, in the depiction of Christ's baptism on a fifth century ivory book cover with scenes from Jesus' life from northern Italy; see Spier (2007), p. 257. John's clothing looks even simpler in the Catacomb of Callixtus. Here it covers only the lower part of his body from the knees upwards and may not be an animal skin (Spier 2007, p. 174). The clothing of the Baptist clearly consists of an animal skin on the mosaic that depicts Christ's baptism in the Arian Baptistery of Ravenna

to their relationship to what is said in the Old and New Testament, are consciously artistic[223] and contribute to the *enargeia* to which Nonnus' ekphrastic narrative aspires.

In the following lines, Nonnus expands on the motif of the waters of baptism (ἀλεξικάκων ὑδάτων and ποταμοῖο ῥοάων), which is not openly mentioned in John, so stressing the idea of the purifying bath (τεοῦ καθαροῖο λοετροῦ and θείοιο λοετροῦ). This occurs in Book 2 as well, in the context of the Wedding at Cana (ll. 26–29) where, although it is placed in relation to Jewish ritual bathing, it alludes to baptismal water.[224] The cathartic role of water in baptism is not explicitly stated in the *Vorlage*, although it appears in all the Synoptics, where the Baptist declares "I shall baptise you with water".[225] In elaborating on the theme of water, the paraphrast employs the adjective ἀλεξίκακος, which is widely employed both in the *Paraphrase* and in the *Dionysiaca*, often referring to the healing function of wine and associated with Dionysus,[226] and also related to the cathartic action of water in Christ's miracles.[227] Thus *exegesis* is interwoven with theatricality, in that Nonnus adds a memorable visual element, in the shape of the Baptist's appearance, and gives tension and vividness to his narrative here. As often in the *Paraphrase*, speed and haste, absent in the Gospel, are present and highlighted, here in the description of John's disciples who run towards him ἐπειγομένῳ πεδίλῳ,[228] and, in a pleonastic exaggeration (συμμιγέες νεφεληδόν ὅλοι, νεφεληδόν being a Nonnian adverb),[229]

(late fifth or early sixth century). See Baldwin Smith (1918), p. 82, Talbot Rice (1968), p. 155, fig. 128, Mathews (1999), p. 132, fig. 102. See Fig. 1.

223 For Nonnus' visualisation of persons, landscapes and scenes, in the cultural context of the visual arts of his era, see Agosti (2014a), esp. pp. 143–155, with examples of Nonnian passages and their more or less close parallels from iconography.

224 See Livrea (2000), esp. pp. 195–198.

225 Mat. 3.11 ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμᾶς βαπτίζω ἐν ὕδατι, Mark 1.8 ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι, Luke 3.16 ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς.

226 As in *Dion.* 19.18, 29.90, 32.198, 45.52.

227 For instance, at *Par.* 9.63–64 πηγῆς ἐγγὺς ἵκανον, ἀλεξικάκῳ δὲ ῥεέθρῳ / νιψάμενος (*I came close to the spring, and in the evil-averting waters, / washing off* …) and 11.127–128 ἀλεξικάκῳ τινὶ πηλῷ / ὀφθαλμοὺς μερόπων λιποφεγγέας οὗτος ἀνοίξας (*with some evil-averting mud / he had opened the lightless eyes of mortals*). See further Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 253, on *Par.* 11.127b.

228 Also in *Dion.* 36.425, *Par.* 11.131, 20.12.

229 Before Nonnus, and uniquely, perhaps in Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Moys.* 1.63, if we accept Danielou's reading (J. Danielou, *Grégoire de Nysse. La vie de Moïse. Sources chrétiennes*. Paris 1968). In the Gregorian passage Simonetti (1984) prints αἰφνηδόν, the reading of a number of manuscripts (the reading of the others being νεφηδόν. See Simonetti's apparatus criticus). In the *Paraphrase* it always occurs in the context of people surrounding Christ (*Par.* 4.147, 11.174). Five times in the *Dionysiaca* (14.337, 15.1, 25.288, 39.15 and 347,

in the description of the mass of people who hasten to be baptised by Christ (σπεύδουσι).[230]

E.2 *Announcement to the Sick Boy's Father of the Child's Cure*

Nonnus endows this scene with an atmosphere of theatricality through his use of direct speech and through the vividness of his description of the meeting between father and servants.

Par. **4.230–236**	**John 4.51**
καί οἱ τηλεπόροιο καταστείχοντι κελεύθου *ἤντεον* αὐχήεντες ὀπάονες· οὐδὲ μὲν ἀνήρ δμῶας ἑοὺς ἐρέεινε γεγηθότας· ἐκ δὲ προσώπου υἱὸν ἑὸν *ζώοντα* σοφῇ γίνωσκε σιωπῇ. Καί οἱ πάντες ἔλεξαν ὁμήλυδες ἡδέι μύθῳ· "*ζώει* σός, φιλότεκνε, ποδήνεμος υἱὸς ὁδίτης, νῦν πλέον ἢ τὸ πάροιθε σαώτερος".	ἤδη δὲ αὐτοῦ καταβαί- νοντος οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτοῦ *ὑπήντησαν* αὐτῷ λέγοντες ὅτι ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ *ζῇ*.
And as he was returning on the far-travelling road, he met with his proud attendants. The man did not even question his joyful servants; from their faces, in wise silence, he perceived that his son was alive. And all coming together told him with sweet word: "Child-loving father, your son lives, and walks with wind-swift feet, now more safe and sound than before".	As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering.

The episode illustrates the reaction on the part of the father of the cured boy as he learns that his son is safe. Nonnus retains only a few terms of the Gospel verse (ἤντεον, ζώοντα and ζώει, underlined), while introducing two elements absent from his model. The synonymic accumulation is documented in the two epic terms (ὀπάονες and δμῶας)[231] that render the more prosaic δοῦλοι of

41.72). The metaphor is based on the Iliadic νέφος πεζῶν (4.274, 23.133), Τρώων (16.66), exploited, in variation, by later epic poets. See Caprara (2005), p. 249 f.

230 For the theatricality that Nonnus' narration acquires through such descriptions, see Rotondo (2013), pp. 99–100.

231 Both terms employed by Nonnus are of a higher register than δοῦλος: ὀπάων is attested in *Il.* 10.58, 17.610, 32.360, Pind. *Pyth.* 9.64a, Aesch. *Supp.* 492, *Cho.* 769, Eur. *Hec.* 979, *Ion.* 980,

the Gospel.[232] Nonnus says that, after a long journey, the man does not question his servant. In Nonnus' version, the father guesses simply by looking at the faces of the servants (υἱὸν ἑὸν ζώοντα σοφῇ γίνωσκε σιωπῇ) that his son has been healed.[233] The metaphorical phrase consisting of the adjective σοφῇ attached to σιωπῇ creates a kind of personification. The idea of a "wise silence", probably an echo of proverbial expressions,[234] occurs elsewhere in the *Paraphrase*[235] and evokes the theme of "eloquent silence", which also appears in the *Dionysiaca*.[236] Here, the idea of "wise silence" enhances the solemnity of the scene and implies human amazement before divine majesty and wonders, as it does elsewhere in the poem, too.[237]

In rephrasing the Johannine text, Nonnus re-elaborates the first part by inventing a reaction of speechless surprise on the part of the father and the mental process that leads to the realisation that his son has been cured. Nonnus then returns to a more faithful rendering of the Johannine account, adopting the servants' statement of the original, but changing it to direct speech, not used in the Gospel, to present his scene in a more lively and theatrical fashion.[238] Moreover, the emphasis on the healing is such that the boy is described as a wind-swift traveller (ποδήνεμος ὁδίτης), in a *junctura* formed by a Homeric

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Soph. *Ant.* 1108, Ap. Rh. 1.131. Δμώς is a typically poetic noun: for instance, *Il.* 19.333, *Od.* 7.225, 14.399, Hes. *Op.* 60, Theocr. 24.47, Eur. *El.* 822, *al.*

232 See Caprara (2005) *ad loc.*, pp. 313 and 30–33.

233 As Accorinti (1996, p. 420) notes.

234 Ἡ γὰρ σιωπὴ τοῖς σοφοῖσιν ἀπόκρισις (Eur. fr. 977 *TrGrF*), τὸ σιγᾶν πολλάκις ἐστὶ σοφώτατον ἀνθρώπῳ νοῆσαι (Pind. *Nem.* 5.18). See Tosi (1991), pp. 49–50 (nn. 23 and 25).

235 Cf. 11.145 σοφὴν σφρηγῖδα σιωπῆς, 12.167 ἴδμονι σιγῇ, 21.139 ἄλλα δὲ θαύματα πολλὰ σοφῇ σφρηγίσσατο σιγῇ.

236 On the theme of *eloquent silence* as a *Letmotiv* occurring in the description of pantomimic dances in the *Dionysiaca* (19.210, 218), see Caprara (2005), pp. 29, 31–32. More specifically, in her comment ad loc. (p. 313), Caprara interprets the "wise" silence as "meaningful", thus pertaining to the sphere of *eloquent silence*. See also Caprara's comment on l. 150 of the same book (p. 251), on the phrase μάρτυρι σιγῇ. On this line, see also Vian (1997), p. 149.

237 "Un silenzio profondo, scelto, è anche atto d'umiltà di fronte all'indicibile maestosità divina", as Rotondo (2012, p. 448) puts it, especially with regard to *Par.* 21.139, where "wise silence" is attributed to the Evangelist's statement that he does not intend to report the large number of the miracles that Jesus has performed. Likewise, shortly before Lazarus' resurrection, Christ asks from Martha to keep σοφὴν σφραγῖδα σιωπῆς on her lips at *Par.* 11.145. Spanoudakis (2014b, p. 266) comments that "wise reticence" suggests devotion and faith in God and is also associated with the idea of a rite, especially a rite of initiation.

238 The paraphrastic technique of replacing indirect speech with direct speech is very rare in the poem: see below, *F. Handling of Speech* (*Direct / Indirect / Dialogue*).

epithet frequently employed for Iris[239] and designed to present in emphatic terms the boy's condition as that of a very healthy and highly energetic person, so creating a sharp contrast between the present situation and the previous immobility caused by the illness.[240] In addition, the boy is defined as "even healthier than in the past",[241] a phrase that stresses the spiritual aspect of the cure, in terms of content, while echoing, in terms of style, epic expressions, such as μᾶλλον ἔτ' ἢ τὸ πάροιθεν (*Od.* 1.322, Hes. *Th.* 666) and πλεῖον ἔτ' ἢ τὸ πάροιθεν (ibid. 531, Ap. Rh. 4.864).

E.3 *The Resurrection of Lazarus*

In Book 11 we find one of the most spectacular examples in the whole *Paraphrase* of the expansion of a single Gospel verse. The concise Gospel verse (44), which describes how Lazarus emerges from the sepulchre, his body still wrapped in bandages, and reports Christ's command that he be set free, is expanded over no less than twenty lines (159–180). Some scholars have observed that the episode of the Raising of Lazarus, typologically connected to the vision of Ezekiel (*Ez.* 37), marks a turning point in the Johannine narrative, as it closes the first part of the Gospel, which is mainly focused on the "signs", or the miracles, and acts as a prelude to the account of the Passion of Christ.[242]

Greek Christian poetry dealt a great deal with the theme of Lazarus' death and resurrection, which prefigure the period Christ spends in the tomb and His *Anastasis*. The homily on Lazarus, Mary and Martha by Amphilochius of Iconium is one of the earliest extant texts to elaborate on this subject.[243] Amphilochius had links with Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, to whom an epigram on Lazarus is also ascribed.[244] Roughly contemporary with Nonnus are the Homeric *Centos* controversially attributed to Eudocia, in which different

239 It recurs as a formula (ποδήνεμος ὠκέα Ἶρις) at *Il.* 2.786, 5.368, 11.195, 15.168 and 200, 18.166, 183 and 196, 24.95. See also Caprara (2005), pp. 313–314, on *Par.* 4.235.

240 As Accorinti (1996, p. 421), observes. Cf. the description of the boy at *Par.* 4.212: κέκλιτο νωθρὰ φέρων πεπεδημένα γούνατα νούσῳ (*was lying down with sluggish knees, shackled by disease*). Rotondo (2013, p. 98) observes that immobility is associated with illness and movement with vigour and "liberation" in the *Paraphrase*.

241 For a discussion of the pleonastic comparative, see Caprara (2005), p. 314, on *Par.* 4.236.

242 Reflecting on the structure of the Gospel of John, Dodd distinguishes between the "books of signs" (the first twelve, including Lazarus) and the "books of Passion" (the second half of the Gospel); see Dodd (1953), *passim*. Wiles makes the same distinction (1960, pp. 41–64).

243 See Ernst (2009), pp. 52–53.

244 In the first Book of the *AP*, three epigrams are devoted to this topic: 49, 50, 51, the latter attributed to Gregory of Nazianzus.

versions of a poem on Lazarus are included.[245] The topic continued to enjoy popularity also in later Christian literature.[246]

***Par.* 11.157–180**

εἶπε καὶ ἐσμαράγησε διαπρυσίῃ τινὶ *φωνῇ*·
ἔξιθι, *Λάζαρε, δεῦρο*. λιποφθόγγοιο δὲ νεκροῦ
ἄπνοον ἐψύχωσε δέμας νεκυοσσόος ἠχώ·
ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, καὶ ἔτρεχε νεκρὸς ὁδίτης
στείχων αὐτοκέλευθος ὁμοπλέκτῳ χθόνα ταρσῷ·
ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε, καὶ ἐν φθιμένοισιν ἀκούσας
ἐξ Ἀΐδος νόστησε φυγὰς νέκυς ὄψιμον ἄλλην
ἀθρήσας μετὰ τέρμα βίου παλινάγρετον ἀρχὴν
θαμβαλέην. Ἀίδης δὲ μάτην παρὰ γείτονι Λήθῃ
πανδαμάτωρ ἀδάμαστον ἐδίζετο νεκρὸν ἀλήτην·
καὶ *ποδὸς* ὀρθωθέντος ἀκαμπέα γούνατα σύρων,
τυφλὴν ἰθυκέλευθον ἔχων ἀντώπιον ὁρμὴν
αὐδήεις νέκυς ἔσκε καὶ ἐκ ποδὸς ἄχρι καρήνου
σφιγγόμενον πλεκτῇσιν ὅλον δέμας εἶχε *κερείαις*
θερμὸν ἔχων ἱδρῶτα καλυπτομένοιο προσώπου·
καὶ λινέῳ πεπύκαστο καλύμματι κυκλάδα κόρσην,
σουδάριον τόπερ εἶπε Σύρων στόμα· θαμβαλέῳ δὲ
ἱσταμένῳ νεφεληδὸν ἄναξ ἐπετέλλετο λαῷ·
“*λύσατέ* μοι καὶ κοῦφον ἐάσατε νεκρὸν ὁδεύειν”.
Ὣς φαμένου βασιλῆος ὁμόζυγες αὐτίκα λαοὶ
καὶ μιγάδες ῥήξαντο παλίλλυτα δεσμὰ κερείης
καὶ μελέων βαρύδεσμον ἐγυμνώσαντο καλύπτρην·
καὶ νέκυς εἰς δόμον ἦλθε τὸ δεύτερον ἠθάδι ταρσῷ
φέγγος ἰδὼν πεμπταῖον.

John 11.43–44

καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ ἐκραύγασεν, Λάζαρε, δεῦρο ἔξω. Ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκὼς δεδεμένος τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας κειρίαις, καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ σουδαρίῳ περιεδέδετο. Λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Λύσατε αὐτὸν καὶ ἄφετε αὐτὸν ὑπάγειν.

When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out”. The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go”.

245 Schembra (2007a), pp. 82–87 and pp. 233–237 (later redactions: pp. 318–326 and pp. 366–369, pp. 417–420). On the complex chronology of the different redactions, see ibid. clxxxi.

246 To mention a few examples: Ps.-Eustathius, *Homilia christologica in Lazarum, Mariam et Martham*, composed in the second half of the fifth century, after the Council of Chalcedon (J.H. Declerck [ed.], *Eustathius Antiochenus, Opera omnia*, Turnhout 2002, p. ccccxlviii). Later on, in the sixth century, *Hymns*, 26 and 27 of Romanos Melodos focus on the raising of Lazarus; only the first is considered authentic and contains a dialogue between Hades and Death. A much later hexametric paraphrase (ninth century), written by Cometas, appears in the *AP* (15.40). On the possible influence of Nonnus on this work, see Caprara (2000), p. 257.

(*cont.*)

***Par.* 11.157–180**	**John 11.43–44**
He said and roared with a piercing voice: “Step out, Lazarus, come hither”. The voiceless dead man’s body, lacking breath, was given soul by the corpse-stirring echo; He called forth a man lacking breath, and he ran, a traveling dead man, marching on the ground self-faring, with his feet bound together; He called forth a man lacking breath, and listening from amongst the dead, a runaway corpse he returned from Hades, looking upon another, wondrous, late beginning, starting again after the end of life. By his neighboring Lethe in vain did Hades the all-tamer seek the untamed, wandering dead man. And dragging the unbending knees on his now upright feet, starting his blind, front-facing rush on a straight path, he was a speaking corpse, and from the foot up to his head he had his whole body wrapped up in well-wound grave clothes, while hot sweat was on his covered face; and his circling temple was bound with a linen headband, which the tongue of Syrians called the “sudarion”. Of the people astonished, and standing around like a cloud, the Lord demanded: “Unbind him for me, and let the dead man walk nimble”. Thus spoke the king, and at once the people, all mingled and yoked together, broke the bandages, now loosed again, of his grave clothes, and stripped from his limbs the dress of heavy bondage. And the corpse came a second time to his house, walking on accustomed foot, seeing the light on the fifth day.	

In such a massive piece of *amplificatio*, the paraphrast makes use of many rhetorical devices and an impressive quantity of synonymic adjectives and verbs and has added ideas that do not directly stem from the Gospel. Only a very few features of the *Vorlage* have been included (in italics) in Nonnus’

poetic re-elaboration and not always exactly in the same form in which they appear in the Johannine text. From verse 43 the noun φωνῇ, the verb εἶπε and the concise expression with which Jesus summons Lazarus, Λάζαρε, δεῦρο are retained. From the following verse (44), ποδός, corresponding to πόδας, is maintained, as is κερείαις, which is a rarer form of the Gospel κειρίαις.[247] Furthermore, the important term σουδάριον and the imperative are retained unaltered.

The voice of Christ, φωνή, is qualified by the adjective διαπρύσιος (line 157), "piercing", associated with the verb σμαραγέω,[248] which conveys the impression of the resounding, powerful words of the Lord.[249] The metaphorical term ἠχώ (line 159) is joined to a highly evocative adjective, νεκυοσσόος, which anticipates the theme of the resurrection of Lazarus, while simultaneously alluding to the ultimate meaning of the Resurrection of Christ and to its capacity of "saving" or "urging" the dead.[250] This phrasing expands the plain Gospel φωνῇ μεγάλῃ (43). The image is in turn related to a short *periphrasis* indicating Lazarus as ἄπνοον … δέμας, linked to the genitive λιποφθόγγοιο δὲ νεκροῦ. The adjective λιπόφθογγος is a Nonnian coinage,[251] occurring in the form λιποφθόγγων at *Dion.* 26.288, where, significantly, it is employed in an account which illustrates the role of Dionysus as a saviour. The episode concerns the miracle in which Dionysus endows the dumb children of Aretus and Laobie with the ability to speak.[252] In this case, too, the adjective is intended to stress the reversal performed by the miracle.[253]

247 Κειρίαι(ς) occuring in Origen's comment to this Gospel verse: 28.7,57 and 59, 28.8,61 Blanc. In the latter passage it is explained νῦν γὰρ αἱ κειρίαι νεκρῶν εἰσιν δεσμοί.

248 Cf. *Il.* 21.199 (Zeus' thunder) *Il.* 2.210 (sea), Hes. *Th.* 679 (rumble of the earth).

249 See further Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 274, ad loc. and Ypsilanti (2016), p. 220.

250 See further Accorinti (1996, p. 428) and Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 278, on 159e. On Nonnus' compound adjectives ending with -σσόος, which may come from two different verbs, σῴζω / σόω, "to save", or σεύω, "to shake", see the discussion of βιοσσόος above, on *B. Synonymic Amplificatio and Verbal / Adjectival Accumulation, 1. Simple Additions of Adjectives / Participles*, and Agosti (2003), p. 460 and p. 467: νεκυοσσόος could have both meanings of "saving the dead" or "urge the dead". Livrea (1993, p. 231) interprets it as "shaking the dead". At *Dion.* 44.240, it is attributed to Persephone. See Accorinti (2004), p. 384.

251 See Gigli Piccardi (1985), pp. 107–108.

252 See Agosti (2004), pp. 176–177.

253 As regards the various parallels between Dionysus and Christ suggested by Nonnus, there is a parallel between the episode in which Dionysus cures Hymenaeus, who has been wounded by an arrow, as is hinted by the adjective ἄκλαυτος which describes the eyes of Dionysus at *Dion.* 29.99 (ὄμμασιν ἀκλαύτοισιν ἐπικλαύσας Ὑμεναίῳ), and the episode of the resurrection of Lazarus, where the adjective is used for the eyes of Christ who sheds tears over him at *Par.* 11.124, ὄμμασιν ἀκλαύτοισιν ἀήθεα δάκρυα λείβων (*with unweeping eyes, shedding unaccustomed tears*). See Agosti (2004), pp. 298–301, Rotondo (2013), p. 96. It

The verb ἐψύχωσε underlines the idea on which the whole passage (158–166) is built, that is a dead body returning to life. It occurs in the same *iunctura* also in *Dion*. 41.57 ἔμπνοον *ἐψύχωσε* γονὴν ἐγκύμονι πηλῷ,[254] where it is used to describe the generation of the first men, but it recurs, even more significantly, in an identical formula, at *Dion*. 25.542 ἔμπνοον *ἐψύχωσε* δέμας παλιναυξέι νεκρῷ, in the episode concerning the death and resurrection of Tylus.[255] The hero, depicted on Dionysus' shield, is bitten and killed by a serpent, which in turn is exterminated by the gigantic Damasenus and a double resurrection is performed on both, the snake and Tylus, by the ingestion of a magical herb.[256] The story comes from an ancient Lydian myth and in the Nonnian version the insertion of the figure of a nymph, Moria, seems to be an autonomous addition.[257] It is worth noting that she is the sister of the resurrected hero and displays a number of features that resemble those of Mary, Lazarus' sister.[258]

Nonnus repeats twice the formula ἄπνοον ἄνδρα κάλεσσε (ll. 160 and 162), thus emphasising the idea of the breathless corpse, which is reversed, in the second hemistich of l. 160, by the paradox νεκρὸς ὁδίτης, which replaces the simple Gospel ὁ τεθνηκώς.[259] The metaphorical term ὁδίτης is common in both of Nonnus' poems,[260] where it is always employed as a spondee at the end of hexameter, although in this context its function seems to be to stress the effectiveness of the miracle by giving a picture of what is still a corpse walking. The same noun is also employed twice with similar connotations to describe the miracle of the

should be remembered, however, that Dionysus is never called "saviour" in Nonnus. See Liebeschuetz (1995), pp. 206–207. For the similarities and differences between Dionysus and Christ, see also above, *A. Periphrasis*, discussion of *Par*. 9.26 with the relevant note. As far as Christ's tears are concerned, the adjective ἀήθεα that Nonnus adds has been regarded as a parameter of devaluation of the human aspect of Christ. See Cutino (2009), p. 238, Rotondo (2017c), p. 176. Cf. also Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 251.

254 Accorinti (2004), pp. 180–181.

255 As observed by Spanoudakis in his work on the correpondences, both linguistic and conceptual, between the resurrection of Tylus and the rise of Lazarus. See Spanoudakis (2013; for ἐψύχωσε, in particular, see pp. 197, 202), and id. (2014b), pp. 47–52.

256 On the analogies between the two narratives see also F. Vian, *Nonnos de Panopolis. Les Dionysiaques, IX: Chants XXV–XXIX* (Paris 1990), pp. 41–42 and 267.

257 Agosti (2004), p. 124, and Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 49.

258 For instance, Moria cries (*Dion*. 25.485) and she prays to Damasenus in tears, pointing at her brother's corpse (*Dion*. 25.496–497). See further Spanoudakis (2013), p. 201.

259 The image of a corpse who now lives again is similar to what Chrysostom describes in homily 64 (on John 11.41–48), PG 59.357,45 ὡς ζῶντι διαλεγόμενος τῷ τετελευτηκότι (*addressing the dead man as if he were alive*). For movements of ἄπνοα objects or animals in the *Dionysiaca*, see Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 279, on *Par*. 11.160a.

260 Cf., for instance, *Dion*. 4.287, 5.183. 6.243, 22.41, 42.6, *al.*

paralytic in *Par.* 5.30 (κοῦφος ὁδίτης) and 5.55 (ὀψικέλευθον ὁδίτην). The verb ἔτρεχε,[261] which replaces the Johannine ἐξῆλθεν, makes a stronger impact, in that it gives the resurrection scene a dramatic quality, which is reinforced by the presence of another verb of movement, the participle στείχων, which adds yet further tension. Moreover, Nonnus' phrasing introduces a series of verbs that stress the vital reaction of the resurrected body. This, in contrast to what is said in the Gospel, is described as being among the dead (ἐν φθιμένοισιν). It not only hears (ἀκούσας) the voice of Jesus and returns to life as a fugitive (νόστησε φυγάς) from Hades, but also actively looks (ἀθρήσας) at the new beginning it will make.[262] The expression ὁμοπλέκτῳ ταρσῷ (l. 161) renders the Johannine participle δεδεμένος by a *synecdoche*, ταρσός (very frequent in both Nonnian poems especially in the dative in the last foot of the hexameter),[263] joined to the Nonnian coinage ὁμοπλέκτῳ.[264]

In his rendering of this episode, Nonnus lays particular stress on the antithesis between life and death and points to their paradoxical interaction, in the case of Lazarus. The paradoxical element is rooted in both the pagan and the Christian tradition, starting from the Gospels, and was exploited in various ways and on diverse topics by writers, such as Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nyssa, among others.[265] It can be hardly denied that the Christian paradox *par excellence* is the death and Resurrection of Christ, with its subsequent imagery, such as that of the "sepulchre that gives birth to life", and this paradox is expectedly often expounded in Christian literature.[266] The Lazarus episode is especially close to this cardinal Christological concept and its elaboration involves emphasis on the contrast between life and death which, in Lazarus' case, as will happen for Christ soon, will produce an "unnatural" result of the most universal importance. As far as the passage in question is concerned, as has been already observed, at l. 164 Nonnus emphasises the sharp and almost oxymoronic contrast between death and life, end and beginning, diametrically opposite to each other: τέρμα βίου is juxtaposed to παλινάγρετον ἀρχήν.[267] The latter noun is anticipated in the

261 According to Livrea (1993, p. 232), the verb ἔτρεχε merges the Cyrillian exegesis (2.289,28 Pusey καὶ ὁ νεκρὸς ἔδραμε) with a fragment (259) of Callimachus' *Hecale* (νωθρὸς ὁδίτης).

262 Spanoudakis (2014b, p. 285, on 164a) underlines the astonishment that Lazarus obviously feels at his own resurrection.

263 Cf. *Dion.* 1.33, 2.25, 3.410, 4.407, 6.15, 7.314, 9.51, 10.66, 11.378, *al.*

264 Ὁμόπλεκτος occurs at *Dion.* 15.139, 18.148, 34.224.

265 See further Cameron (1991), pp. 158–188.

266 See, for instance, Cameron (1991), pp. 163–165.

267 See Spanoudakis (2014b), ad loc.

line above (163), by the adjective ἄλλην (in strong *hyperbaton* with ἀρχήν), and clinched by the enjambment, θαμβαλέην, in the line below (165). The *iunctura* παλινάγρετον ἀρχήν, occurring in the same *sedes* in the description of the resurrection of Tylus (*Dion.* 25.545 καὶ νέκυς ἀμφιέπων βιοτῆς παλινάγρετον ἀρχήν) is a further indication of the strong analogy between the two episodes.[268]

A number of other elements, not directly depending on the *Vorlage*, enrich Nonnus' account. Most prominent is the idea of the return of the dead (ἄπνοον ἄνδρα, the adjective ἄπνοον being repeated three times in a few lines) from Hades and Lethe. The two are almost synonymous here, as also happens in other passages in Nonnus, in which Lethe is described more generically as the river of the dead, rather than as the river of oblivion.[269] The short description of Hades is an independent insertion by Nonnus, which stems from the Classical tradition and is rhetorically expressed through the figure of personification, since Hades is depicted as "searching" (ἐδίζετο) for Lazarus. The personification of Hades does appear in Christian literature, albeit not early on.[270] The representation of the return of the dead from Hades also appears in a number of sources of the fifth century dealing with the same episode, such as Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechesis*,[271] the *Homily on Lazarus* attributed to Basil of Seleucia[272] and the Homeric *Centos* attributed to Eudocia.[273] In the present passage of Nonnus, the uttermost humiliation of Hades, who is defeated by Life and loses someone previously in his possession, is strongly emphasised.[274]

268 See Spanoudakis (2013), esp. p. 197.

269 The image of Lethe as a river of Hades occurs in *Dion.* 11.326 in the lament of Dionysus for Ampelus, which is typologically linked to the episode of Lazarus. At *Dion.* 36.201–202, in the description of the battle between Dionysus and Deriades, Lethe is described as full of corpses, and it is mentioned again as the river of the dead in 7.45 and 12.219.

270 See Spanoudakis (2014b), pp. 287–288, on 165b.

271 *Catecheses ad Illuminandos* 5.9 ὥστε τὸν νεκρὸν ἐξ ᾄδου πυλῶν ἀνεκαλέσατο.

272 *Hom. in Laz.* 9.5 Ἅιδης ἐδεσμεύετο, καὶ νεκρὸς ἀπελύετο. See M.B. Cunningham, "Basil of Seleucia's Homily on Lazarus. A New Edition", *Analecta Bollandiana* 104 (1986), p. 174. The last part of the homily also contains a monologue of Death defeated by Christ.

273 First redaction, l. 1284 (ὣς μὲν ἔπειτ' ἀνένεικε καὶ ἤγαγεν ἐξ Ἀΐδαο); see Schembra (2006), pp. 343–346. Second redaction, including the image of Hades defeated by Christ, ll. 1194–1198 (ἔδδεισεν δ' ὑπένερθεν ἄναξ ἐνέρων Ἀϊδωνεύς / ἂψ δ' ἀνεχώρησεν, ὦχρός τέ μιν εἷλε παρειάς / ταρβήσας, ὅτ' ἄκουσε θεοῦ ὄπα φωνήσαντος· / ὤϊξεν δὲ πύλας θανάτου πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας / τῆλε μάλ', ἧχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον). Cf. the apocryphal *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*, for which see Schembra (2007b), p. 182 and Caprara (2000), pp. 254–255.

274 Cf. Livrea (1993), p. 233, quoting Syn. *Hym.* 8.12, where Hades is depicted as a decrepit old man terrified at the sight of Christ. See also Spanoudakis (2016), p. 611.

In a *hyperbaton*, Hades is described as πανδαμάτωρ, the "subduer of all", a term recalling the Homeric epithet for Hypnos,[275] whom Nonnus evokes through the presence of Lethe, besides Hades (in the Classical tradition, Lethe flew around the cave of Hypnos).[276] Πανδαμάτωρ, in turn, creates an etymological play, an assonance and, above all, an antithesis with the following adjective, attributed to Lazarus, ἀδάμαστον ("unsubdued"). The same wordplay occurs both in the *Paraphrase*, where the epithet is attributed to Chronos, and in the *Dionysiaca*, where it qualifies Eros.[277] However, in this context the etymological play perhaps involves a further, "connotative" assonance, echoing the idea of the ἀδάμας of Hades' doors.[278]

The paradoxical image of the νεκρὸν ἀλήτην, the dead wanderer (166), is repeated in different forms another three times in this section: νεκρὸς ὁδίτης (160), φυγὰς νέκυς (163), αὐδήεις νέκυς (169).[279] In both works, Nonnus uses the metaphorical term ἀλήτης as he uses the previous ὁδίτης, as a spondee,[280] and here ἀλήτης functions as a variation on the theme of the νεκρὸς ὁδίτης. The image recurs at l. 175 κοῦφον ἐάσατε νεκρὸν ὁδεύειν, stressing the idea of the corpse liberated by death and therefore being light, as it were.[281]

The genitive ποδός (ll. 167, 169), corresponding to the accusative πόδας in the Gospel, is one of the few terms of the *Vorlage* that remains almost unaltered. In l. 167, in the context of an image not actually corresponding to the Gospel account, the noun is dilated by the synonym γούνατα, joined to the adjective ἀκαμπέα, describing Lazarus' knees as "unbending" or "sound", to underline the new vigour that Jesus has breathed into the resurrected body.[282] The "straight-

275 *Il.* 24.5 and *Od.* 9.373. In Soph. *Ph.* 1467 the epithet is attributed to Zeus. It also occurs in hexametric poetry. For instance, Ap. Rh. 4.475 (of an Erinye); [Opp.] *Cyn.* 2.522 (qualifying iron), etc. It is also related to Hypnos in Themistius' *Βασανιστὴς ἢ φιλόσοφος* (p. 263, c, 4) and in Clemens of Alexandria (*Stromata* 6.2,26,2 ὕπνος ᾕρει πανδαμάτωρ).

276 Ov. *Met.* 11.602.

277 Chronos: *Par.*10.62–63 οὐ χρόνος ἕρπων / πανδαμάτωρ, ἀδάμαστος. Eros: *Dion.* 2.223 πανδαμάτωρ ἀδάμαστος Ἔρως θρασὺς εἰς φόβον ἔπτη; 33.109 πανδαμάτωρ ἀδάμαστε, βιοσσόε σύγχρονε κόσμου; Eros, winged like Hypnos: 31.171 πανδαμάτωρ θεὸς ἄλλος ὁμόπτερος, εἴκελος Ὕπνῳ.

278 Cf., for instance, Theocr. 2.28 Ἄρτεμι, καὶ τὸν ἐν Ἅιδα / κινήσαις ἀδάμαντα καὶ εἴ τί περ ἀσφαλὲς ἄλλο and *Orac. Sib.* 2.227 καὶ τότ' ἀμειλίκτοιο καὶ ἀρρήκτου ἀδάμαντος / κλεῖθρα πέλωρα πυλῶν τε ἀχαλκεύτου Ἀίδαο.

279 The oxymoronic quality of the phrases was observed by Kuhn (1906, p. 139) early on.

280 More than one hundred occurrences. For instance, *Dion.* 1.210, 3.313, 4.77, 5.509, 7.66, 8.157, 10.159, 11.90, *al.*

281 Cf. *Par.* 5.30 κοῦφος ὁδίτης; see Agosti (2003), pp. 364–365. For the possibility, but not certainty, that the phrase here recalls *Orph. Arg.* 174 ζωόν τ' ἐν φθιμένοισι, see Livrea (2014), p. 66.

282 The adjective, which is epic, although not Homeric (see Caprara 2005, p. 319), is employed

going" movement of Lazarus (ἰθυκέλευθον[283] … ὁρμήν) is characterised by an oxymoronic expression, since ὁρμήν is further given the adjectives τυφλήν and ἀντώπιον, which combine the idea of blindness with the image of a sight projected forward. Such a phrasing summarises, on the one hand, the comment of Cyril and other writers who explain that Lazarus was incapable of seeing, because of the bandages covering his face.[284] On the other, the poet also underlines the paradox brought about by the miracle which causes the dead to walk. The man is simultaneously blind but nonetheless capable of looking in front of himself, too, as he has been both dead and alive almost at the same time.

Lazarus' voice, described as αὐδήεις, a notably poetic adjective,[285] adds power to Nonnus' picture of a corpse brought back to life. This word is used elsewhere in interesting fashion by Nonnus to imply the vitality, so to speak, offered by λόγος to inanimate nature.[286] To this detail Nonnus adds the realistic touch of the warm sweat (θερμὸν … ἱδρῶτα) on Lazarus' face, to render the effects wrought by the life that has returned to the corpse and to suggest the efforts that Lazarus' body, bound by the bandages (πλεκτῇσιν), makes as it fights against death. The genitive καλυπτομένοιο προσώπου corresponds to the Johannine ὄψις περιεδέδετο and anticipates the alliteration of l. 172.

In order to describe the *sudarium*[287] on Lazarus' head in a visually memorable way, the poet uses a *periphrasis* that employs an alliterative rhythm (*καὶ* λινέῳ *πεπύκαστο καλύμματι κυκλάδα κόρσην*, l. 172). The *periphrasis* includes an euphemistic expression ("head-covering of linen") introducing the term

elsewhere in the *Par.* to define strong faith or conviction: for instance, 3.67 ἤθεσιν ἀπλανέεσσιν ἀκαμπέα πίστιν ἀέξων; 4.245 καὶ καθαραῖς πραπίδεσσιν ἀκαμπέα δέξατο πειθώ. For Livrea (2014, p. 66), the adjective means that Lazarus' limbs "were still tightly constricted by the linen bonds of the graveclothes". Spanoudakis (2014b, p. 292) points out that the image of the "heavy limbs" bears mystic connotations, which imply the deliverance from death and darkness.

283 A Nonnian coinage; ten occurrences in the Nonnian corpus (*Dion.* 15.365, 17.109, 19.147, 29.75 and 308, 33.140, 37.222 and 724, *Par.* 11.168, 12.158), always at the same *sedes*.

284 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.290,1–3 καὶ τῷ μὲν καλύμματι τοῦ προσώπου τὸ βλέπειν ἀφῃρημένος ἀκωλύτως δὲ πρὸς τὸν καλέσαντα τρέχων καὶ τὴν δεσποτικὴν ἐπιγινώσκων φωνήν. See further Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 292.

285 Employed by Homer to describe the human voice (for instance, *Od.* 5.334, 6.125), a divinity speaking with human voce, such as Circe (*Od.* 10.136, 11.8, 12.150) and Calypso (*Od.* 12.449), or Achilles' horse that speaks with human voice (*Il.* 19.407).

286 On the "talking vine", in particular, see Caprara (2008), esp. pp. 61–66.

287 The link between the raising of Lazarus and the resurrection of Christ is evident in the Gospel also in terms of lexical correspondences: the term σουδάριον occurs only twice in John's text. Nonnus' rephrasing of the *Vorlage* accurately mirrors the verbal parallel, in that in the whole *Paraphrase* the term occurs only here and at 20.30, where it is related to Christ (σουδάριον τόπερ εἶπε Σύρων ἐπιδήμιος αὐδή), for which see above, *C. Explanations*.

sudarium which is thus explained, as it is a foreign term and Nonnus consistently provides the reader with clarifications when he retains a lexical borrowing.[288] With Σύρων στόμα, a metonymy (στόμα) is used to indicate the Syriac language. In Cyril's comment on verse 44 the term *κάλυμμα* occurs no less than three times[289] and in Origen's comment on the same verse it appears twice.[290]

In the final part of the passage (ll. 176–180), the paraphrast elaborates massively on the *Vorlage* by inserting a description completely absent from John. Here we watch the people who have gathered to witness the miracle (ὁμόζυγες … λαοί, in *hyperbaton*) help the resurrected Lazarus remove his shroud and bandages. The poet employs *anaphora* (triple *καί* at the beginning of ll. 177–179), the metaphor δεσμά (if we interpret the term as "chains" rather than "bandages" and take it to suggest the idea of death as a prison), and *hypallage* combined with *synecdoche* in the expression ἠθάδι ταρσῷ. In using the verbs ῥήξαντο ("they broke") and the metaphorical verb ἐγυμνώσαντο ("they undressed"), Nonnus creates a theatrical effect, so helping the reader to visualise the scene. This phrasing, which produces a vivid picture, is one more impressive instance of the use of *enargeia*. The presence of the adjective παλίλλυτος, possibly created by Nonnus himself, is particularly significant in this context, as it connects with a later passage in which the Resurrection of Christ is described. There it describes the loose shroud of Jesus (*Par.* 20.29 *καὶ κεφαλῆς ζωστῆρα παλίλλυτον ἅμματι χαίτης*) and the dissolution of the bonds of death (*Par.* 20.44 *ἀκλινέος θανάτοιο παλίλλυτα δεσμὰ πατήσας*).[291]

E.4 *Scenery and Setting*

E.4.a Christ's Entry to Jerusalem

	***Par.* 12.57–65**	**John 12.13–14**
57	ἀπ' εὐδένδροιο δὲ κήπου ἀκροκόμους φοίνικας ἐγυμνώσαντο κορύμβων. Καὶ χλοεροὺς ὄρπηκας ἐς ἠέρα λαὸς ἑλίσσων εὐφήμοις στομάτεσσιν ἀνέκλαγε σύνθροον ἠχώ.	ἔλαβον τὰ βαΐα τῶν φοινίκων καὶ ἐξῆλθον εἰς ὑπάντησιν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἐκραύγαζον, Ὡσαννά·

288 For this, and for *sudarium* more specifically, see above, *C. Explanations*.

289 2.290,1, 292,4 and 9 Pusey (the second and third occurrences in a metaphorical sense: "sin", "shame").

290 28.7,60 and 28.8,62 Blanc.

291 On the *iunctura* παλίλλυτα δεσμά, see Livrea (1989), p. 203, Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 309, Accorinti (1996), pp. 162–163.

(*cont.*)

Par. **12.57–65**	**John 12.13–14**
Καὶ πολὺν ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα κορυμβοφόροιο κελεύθου δίζυγα πομπὸν ἔχων καὶ ὀπίστερον ἑσμὸν ὁδίτην Ἰησοῦς πεφόρητο μέσος μιτρούμενος ἀνδρῶν, ἰθύνων ἀχάλινον ὄνον ταλαεργὸν ὁδίτην, ἑζόμενος νώτοισιν ἀπειρήτοιο φορῆος.	εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμε- νος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. Εὑρὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὀνά- ριον ἐκάθισεν ἐπ' αὐτό.
From the garden of fair trees they stripped the leaf-crowned palms of their clusters. And turning round in the air the green shoots, the multitude cried aloud a common-voiced echo with auspicious mouths. And along the cluster-bearing path, on one side and the other, He had a double-yoked escort and also a traveling swarm behind Him, and Jesus was carried along in the middle, girdled between men, guiding in a straight line an unbridled ass that endured the labor of the march; He was seated on the back of an inexperienced carrier.	So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel”! And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it.

The action described in John’s simple phrase ἔλαβον τὰ βάια τῶν φοινίκων καὶ ἐξῆλθον εἰς ἀπάντησιν αὐτοῦ is analysed in the various stages that one might picture. Thus, Nonnus once more creates a short but impressive *ekphrasis* as he develops the Gospel scene insisting in the graphic details he imagines.[292]

The βάια must first have been gathered, this act being interestingly elaborated as a “divesting” of the palms’ ends, in a garden full of beautiful trees. The cutting of the branches reflects, in variation, images found in the Synoptics, as has already been observed: Mat. 21.8 ἄλλοι δὲ ἔκοπτον κλάδους ἀπὸ τῶν δένδρων καὶ ἐστρώννυον ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, Mark 11.8 ἄλλοι δὲ στιβάδας κόψαντες ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν. On the level of symbolism, it has been also argued that acclamation with palm branches possesses connotations of royalty and that these branches are associ-

292 The Entry to Jerusalem inspired poetic elaboration also in Byzantine times. The scene is dealt with in the poetry of George of Pisidia (*Carm. ined.* n. 100 Sternbach [L. Sternbach, “Georgii Pisidae carmina inedita II”, *WS* 14, 1892, pp. 51–68]) and Theodoros Prodromos (PG 133.1180). See Gonnelli (2001), pp. 415–416.

ated with triumph and resurrection.[293] In terms of visual representation, here, as well as elsewhere in this passage, the text seems to be influenced by iconography. The episode was frequently represented in Christian art from the fourth century onwards.[294] In both earlier and later representations of the Entry into Jerusalem, individuals, especially youths, are commonly shown climbing a tree and cutting branches,[295] so that the diverse activity of the crowd, with some cutting the branches and others greeting Christ, is presented in its fullness. Illuminated Gospels also portray the scene in an extremely picturesque way. In the illuminated Gospel preserved in the National Library of France (Paris. Gr. 115), dated to the tenth or eleventh century but reflecting old models, on fol. 93^v, on the borders of the page next to the text of Mat. 21.8, we have the depiction of the road on which Jesus moves and along which a series of trees extends.[296]

In Nonnus, the "fresh / green young shoots" held by the crowd continue this notion of flora in an idealised setting. The Homeric *ἅπαξ λεγόμενον* ὄρπηξ (*Il.* 21.38 τάμνε νέους ὄρπηκας), often used by Nonnus,[297] implies freshness and tenderness,[298] which the adjective χλοερούς emphasises here. This continues the series of adjectives describing the garden (εὔδενδρος) and the palms (ἀκρόκομοι) imagined by Nonnus, all these epithets enhancing the idyllic atmosphere. Although not a very common adjective in Greek, εὔδενδρος is used extensively

293 Greco (2014), pp. 309–310. Carrying or waving branches was also a feature of ancient Greek religious festivals and Jewish purificatory rites. See Mathews (1999, p. 30), who does not accept that palm branches are associated with royalty and, consequently, that the Entry into Jerusalem has its origins in imperial imagery. Instead, he argues that it is rooted in imagery of Roman aristocracy (Mathews 1999, pp. 30–34).

294 See Wessel (1965), p. 156.

295 Cf., for instance, Baldwin Smith (1918), pp. 123–128 with illustrations. The tree is not necessarily depicted as a palm tree (as it does not seem to be one in the Rossano Gospels illustration), but its presence, with people climbing on it, is characteristic and thus becomes a stock element of iconography. Mathews (1999, pp. 33–34) traces the Baiophoros motif of the men climbing trees back to Roman sarcophagi harvest scenes. The branches and the flora are a basic feature of the scene, even in the rigid and static representation of the wooden lintel from Al-Muallaqa, which is frugal and minimal in its details, in that it omits persons climbing trees and cutting branches from them. Here the branches form the background, without contributing to any vividness of the scene, since they are not involved in people's movements. For the lintel, see below in this section.

296 Millet (1916), pp. 262–263. See Fig. 2.

297 In a similar phrasing, *Dion.* 15.47 ἁβροκόμων ὄρπηκας ἀπηλοίησε κορύμβων. Elsewhere, *Dion.* 12.182 and 186, 15.113, 16.279, 17.86, 24.32, *al.*

298 Cf. Sappho fr. 104 ὄρπακι βραδίνῳ, Ap. Rh. 4.1425 ποίης δε μὲν ὑψόθι μακροί / βλάστεον ὄρπηκες, Call. *H. Ap.* 1 δάφνινος ὄρπηξ, Nic. *Th.* 33 μαράθου … νήχυτος ὄρπηξ, Opp. *Hal.* 297f. λιπαρούς … ἐλαίης / ὄρπηκας. Ὄρπηξ is a Homeric *hapax* (*Il.* 21.38). See also Williams (1978) on Call. loc. cit.

by Cyril, who associates it with a beautiful παράδεισος, an idyllic garden, at least three times, always in the superlative.[299] It also appears in one of Nonnus' most significant sources, Pindar, albeit not there related to the image of a garden.[300] Ἀκρόκομος first qualifies the palm at Dion. Per. 1010.[301] The Theocritean use of ἀκρόκομος, attributed to the cypress, is typical, since it contributes to the formation of a *locus amoenus* in 22.37 ff. (22.40 λεῦκαί τε πλάτανοί τε καὶ ἀκρόκομοι κυπάρισσοι). The metaphorical use of the adjective, to qualify trees, is relatively rare (cf. Eur. *Ph.* 516 ἀκροκόμοις ἂμ πετάλοις, Archias *AP* 7.213,2 σκιερᾶς ἀκροκόμου πίτυος) and thus all the more notable, with its connotations of tranquility and the splendour of nature, in the present passage.

Above all, the gestures of the crowd, who whirl the branches in the air, create a *tableau vivant*. The warm welcome by the Jews intensifies the triumphal atmosphere of Jesus' arrival and, together with the depiction of the leafy landscape, set a tone and form a scene that stands in sharp contrast to the destructive attitude of the same crowd, which, of course, will be the final outcome of Christ's entry into the city. In his description of the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus is arrested, Nonnus achieves a similar atmosphere of drama (see next section). Indeed, the impact of the scene of the passage discussed here is even more forceful, since it is closely juxtaposed to the later passage preceding the Crucifixion. The image in which the crowd "whirls" (ἐς ἠέρα ἑλίσσων) the fresh palm branches is, on the one hand, a self-variation by Nonnus on *Dion.* 12.186, where the vine twists its branches in an account that employs the same vocabulary as the present passage: ὄρχατος ἀμπελόεις χλοεροὺς ὅρπηκας ἑλίσσων. Furthermore, Nonnus has a penchant for a vivid image of some person waving an object ἐς ἠέρα and uses it several times in the *Dionysiaca* (e.g. 7.93, 9.46, 12.351, 46.141, on hair). On the other hand, the gesture described here

299 Seventeen occurrences in total in Cyril's corpus, of which three related to the image of the garden (which stands for the souls of people): *Comm in Is.* PG 70.64,35–37 *Παράδεισος* δὲ πάλιν, εἰ μὲν ἔχοι πηγάς, *εὐδενδρότατος* ἔσται τις, καὶ ταῖς τῶν καρπῶν ἀφθονίαις πολυειδῶς ἐναβρύνεται ("and if it has springs, it will be a paradise rich in trees, which takes pride in many ways in the abundance of its fruit"), *Comm in Is.* PG 70.1296,14–16 ἡ ψυχὴ γένοιτο ἂν *ὡς κῆπος* μεθύων, τουτέστιν εὐανθὴς καὶ *εὐδενδρότατος* καὶ ποικίλαις ἀνθέων ἰδέαις ἐξωραϊσμένος καὶ παντοδαποὺς ἐκφέρων καρπούς ("the soul would become like an intoxicated garden, that is a garden rich in flowers, very rich in trees and adorned with various kinds of flowers and producing every kind of fruit"), *Comm in Is.* PG 70.1108,37–40 (ἡ δὲ παράκλησις) ... οὐκ ἔρημος ἔσται καὶ κεχερσωμένη ἀλλ' οἷά τις *παράδεισος* εὐανθής τε καὶ *εὐδενδρότατος*, καλοῖς τε καὶ εὐγενέσι φυτοῖς κατάκομος, καὶ εὐκαρπίαν ἔχων τὴν νοητήν ("[and the calling] ... will not be like a destitute desert, but like a garden rich in flowers and very rich in trees, full of nice and noble plants and possessing the spiritual fruitfulness").

300 *Pyth.* 4.74; *Ol.* 8.9; *Nem.* 11.25.

301 And perhaps the Nonnian use is echoed in John of Gaza (*Descr.* 2.334).

is perhaps also inspired by iconography. Of various depictions of the Βαϊοφόρος we may mention a few from Egypt and the East. On the wooden lintel of the Church of the Virgin (Al-Muallaqa), one of the figures is presented as waving a palm branch. Again, members of the crowd hold lofty palm branches over their heads in the depiction of the Entry in the Rossano Gospels (probably sixth century Palestine).[302] Also, people hold branches above their heads in the same scene depicted on one of the ivory panels attached to the throne of Archbishop Maximian of Ravenna, produced in Constantinople or Alexandria in the sixth century.[303]

The pictorial nature of the narration reaches a crescendo in ll. 61–65, where Christ is presented as riding on a donkey and surrounded by the Jews on every side. The narration is rich in characteristic nouns and adjectives (and a participle), which bear a more or less striking metaphorical meaning. The way (κέλευθος) is described as κορυμβοφόρος, an adjective almost exclusively used by Nonnus,[304] who attributes it above all to Dionysus, in his pagan epic,[305] and employs it only here in the *Paraphrase*. Such an account also recalls the road adorned with trees in representations such as that in Paris. Gr. 115, fol. 93^{v} (see above). Interestingly, the adjective echoes the κόρυμβα of the palms cut at l. 56, thus offering continuity to the narrative and also contributing to the impression of an unfolding theatrical scene. The common epic formula ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα, which can be used either for movement (e.g. *Il.* 2.779, 23.320, 24.5, Ap. Rh. 3.651) or for stability (e.g. *Il.* 7.156), here describes the presence of the crowd, which is in motion around Christ, who is also moving. The adjective ὀπίστερος

302 For the Rossano Gospels miniature, see Fig. 3. For a discussion, see Mathews (1999), pp. 39, 43. See ibid. also for a similar depiction on a sarcophagus relief from Constantinople of the firth century. For the lintel (Cairo, Coptic Museum, Al-Muallaqa Lintel 753), see Wessel (1965), pp. 138 and 156, and G. Peers, "Vision and Community among Christians and Muslims: The Al-Muallaqa Lintel in Its Eighth-Century Context", *Arte Medievale* 6 (2007), pp. 25–46. Scholarship has not been unanimous as regards its dating. A popular recent view is an eighth century dating, although a fifth and sixth century dating had been earlier put forward. As far as Nonnus' scene is concerned, cf. also the depiction of people holding branches above their heads in Christ's Entry to Jerusalem on a late fourth century sarcophagus, now in the Vatican Museo Pio Cristiano (Jensen 2000, p. 117, fig. 41). See also next note.

303 See Talbot Rice (1968), pp. 421–425. See Fig. 4. Mathews argues that the rise of the iconography of the Entry to Jerusalem is related to anti-Arian polemics, since Christ, the "as yet unconsecrated bread and wine", is greeted as Lord, "King of Glory" in this scene, something which confirms the eternal divinity of Logos, even before His incarnation. See Mathews (1999), p. 53.

304 Except for Nonnus, it occurs only at Longus 2.26,1.

305 *Dion.* 14.311, 15.131, 18.3, 44.13, 48.15.

("following", from ὄπισθε) adds one more view-point, from rear to right and left, designated by ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα, and emphasises the point that Jesus is surrounded on every side, except in front, since He is moving forward. A similar description occurs at [Athan.] *Sermo in ram. palm.* 4.3[306] καὶ οἱ μὲν προπορευόμενοι, οἱ δὲ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔκραζον, where an emphasis on the enthusiasm of the crowd, as it moves forward, elaborates the Gospel scene.

The stress that Nonnus lays on the fact that Christ is encircled by the crowd, whose multitudinous density is captured metaphorically by the noun ἑσμός, culminates with the adjective μέσος and the participle μιτρούμενος juxtaposed to it. Μιτρόω, meaning literally "to wrap someone or something with a girdle", is a verb favoured by Nonnus, who occasionally uses it metaphorically of humans or divinities surrounded by a number of people / deities or objects.[307] In the *Paraphrase*, the resurrected Christ is also μιτρωθείς by the disciples at 20.88; it has been argued that this image may be drawing on iconography, in which Christ is depicted surrounded by the disciples, and that μιτρωθείς recalls the solar symbolism that informs the figure of Christ.[308] In the present passage, the emphasis that all these terms lay on the idea of the Jews enveloping Christ coexists with the reference, straightforward or implied, to movement (πομπόν, ὁδίτην, πεφόρητο, immediately preceding μέσος μιτρούμενος). The movement is conceived as taking place along a road "decorated" with green branches, so that the description of the crowd following and framing the central figure results in the impression of a large moving and colourful image which animates the narrative and endows it with visual momentousness.

E.4.b The Garden in Which Jesus Was Arrested

Book Eighteen opens with the description of the garden to which Judas took the high priests to arrest Christ, who was already there. Livrea's text[309] runs:

306 H. Nordberg, *Athanasiana I. Commentationes humanarum litterarum* 30.2 (Helsinki 1962).

307 *Dion.* 14.28, 39.134, 48.193. For a constellation: 25.409.

308 For this, and for the literary motif of the disciples as a crown, or as sunbeams around Jesus, see further Accorinti (1996), on *Par.* 20.88. For Christ as Sun in early (third and fourth century) literature and iconography, see Jensen (2000), pp. 42–44. The disciples are often conceived as branches attached to Christ; see Jensen (2000), p. 61.

309 Livrea (1989) reads ἐυπρύμνων … κέδρων at *Par.* 18.2 (with a slight correction of the ἐυτρύμνων of a manuscript reading, κέδρων being the manuscripts' reading) and, consequently, τῶν κέδρων in John 18.1. Scheindler has ἐυπρήων (his own conjecture) and Κεδρών; the adjective can be translated as *bona vel pulchra promunturia habens* (as Preller 1989, p. 82, renders it; cf. Golega 1966, p. 27: "eines Felsen mit schönem Vorgebirge"). The ἐυπρέμνων of one family of manuscripts is traditionally printed and approved by scholars (for instance, Bordatus 1561, p. 158, Nansius 1589, p. 238, Sylburg 1596, p. 212, Abram 1623, p. 194, Marcellus 1861, p. 248, Golega 1966, p. 27) and translated as *stipites pulchros habentium ubi cedrorum*

***Par.* 18.1–10**

Ὣς φάμενος τάδε πάντα διέστιχεν ἔμφρονι ταρσῷ
πέζαν ἐς ἀντιπέραιαν, ἐυπρύμνων ὅθι κέδρων
οἴδματι λυσσήεντι κυλίνδεται ὄμβρος ἀλήτης,
οἰδαίνων βαθὺ χεῦμα χαραδραίου ποταμοῖο·
ἀγχιφανὴς ὅθι κῆπος ἐύχλοος, ὃν παραμείβων
κοίρανος ἔνδον ἵκανεν ἐθήμονος οἷά τε βαίνων
φυταλιὴν εὔοδμον ἀειθαλέος παραδείσου.
Καὶ θρασὺς ᾔδεε κεῖνο φυτήκομον ἄλσος Ἰούδας,
Χριστὸς ὅτι σκιόεσσαν ἐρημάδα πέζαν ὁδεύων
πολλάκι χῶρον ἐκεῖνον ἐσήλυθε·

After He said all this, on prudent foot He cut across
to the riverbank lying opposite, where, under the cedars of sturdy roots,
the wandering stream rolls with frenzied, swollen waves,
making the deep flow of the mountain river bulge.
Appearing close by was a verdant garden, which the Lord passed
through and went inside, as if He were marching through the familiar,
fragrant orchard of His ever-blooming paradise.
And audacious Judas knew that luxuriant grove,
because Christ, marching along the shadowy, deserted shore,
often entered that place.

John 18.1–2

Ταῦτα εἰπὼν Ἰησοῦς ἐξῆλθεν σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τῶν κέδρων ὅπου ἦν κῆπος, εἰς ὃν εἰσῆλθεν αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. Ἤιδει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτὸν τὸν τόπον, ὅτι πολλάκις συνήχθη Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples.

The simple χείμαρρος of the Gospel is amplified by Nonnus by means of a *periphrastic* expression in which the straightforward noun is replaced by the less specific ὄμβρος ἀλήτης, whose movement is depicted so as to create an exaggerating image with the phrases οἴδματι λυσσήεντι κυλίνδεται … / οἰδαίνων

(Bordatus), *cedrorum pulchros stipites habentium* (Nansius), *pulchrorum ramorum ubi ad cedros* (Sylburg, Abram), *les cèdres aux larges troncs* (Marcellus). Livrea translates “i cedri dalle robuste radici” and cites a number of ancient passages which explain πρυμνόθεν as “from the roots” in support of his reading and interpretation. See the argumentation in Livrea (1989), pp. 108–110. Barrett (1978) accepts Κεδρῶν as the original reading in John 18.1, whilst observing that τῶν κέδρων seems to be a Greek popular etymology for the brook Kidron of Jerusalem. The differences between editions as regards this group of adjective and noun / name is not crucial for the present discussion.

βαθὺ χεῦμα χαραδραίου ποταμοῖο, perhaps inspired by an impressive Homeric description realised with similar vocabulary.[310] Synonymy (οἴδματι-οἰδαίνων) and accumulation of adjectives (the codices' ἐυπρύμων or ἐυπρέμνων [ἐυπρήων Scheindler], λυσσήεντι, βαθύ, χαραδραίου) are still always present. Similar observations can be made regarding the extended expressions and accumulated adjectives which expand the laconic κῆπος of the Gospel and which, forming a τοπογραφία,[311] now create, as Greco (2014, 306) remarks, the impression of a *locus amoenus*: κῆπος εὔχλοος, φυταλιὴν εὔοδμον ἀειθαλέος παραδείσου. The same imagery is continued with the rendering of the Gospel's τόπον as a φυτήκομον ἄλσος.

On the one hand, the sketching of this "heavenly" environment has theological significance. Commenting on John's κῆπος, Cyril observes that the setting of Jesus' arrest recalls the fact that man's misfortunes began in such a garden and that man's return to his former, heavenly state will be possible after Christ's passion, which also starts in a garden.[312] Nonnus therefore emphasises the significance of the garden by magnifying the focus of the narrative on the garden. This he does through a description of particular idyllic features that he invents or imagines: rich vegetation, perfumes, evergreen foliage, even the very idea of "paradise". At the same time, such a description enhances the drama of the moment. The more pleasant and peaceful the environment, the greater the power of the violent scenes that follow and the emphasis on the hostility and dangerousness of those who arrest Christ, who have already been presented (*Par.* 18.12) as στρατὸν ἀσπιστῆρα … ἀρχιερήων, corresponding to John's τὴν σπεῖραν, before the Gospel's reference to their arms (18.3 ὅπλων). Thus a kind of

310 Livrea (1989, p. 109) compared *Il.* 13.137–139 ὀλοοίτροχος ὣς ἀπὸ πέτρης / ὅν τε κατὰ στεφάνης ποταμὸς χειμάρροος ὤσῃ, / ῥήξας ἀσπέτῳ ὄμβρῳ ἀναιδέος ἔχματα πέτρης (*like a boulder from a cliff that a river swollen by winter rains thrusteth from the brow of a hill, when it has burst with its wondrous flood the foundations of the ruthless stone*; tr. Murray) and Theocr. 22.49–50 (μύες) … ἕστασαν ἠύτε πέτροι ὀλοίτροχοι οὕς τε κυλίνδων / χειμάρρους ποταμὸς μεγάλαις περιέξεσε δίναις ([the muscles] … *stood out like rounded boulders which some winter torrent has rolled and polished in its mighty eddies* [Gow's translation]. For Theocritus' inspiration from the Homeric passage, see Gow 1952, vol. 2, on Theocr. loc. cit.).

311 See Lausberg (1998), § 819: τοπογραφία is defined as a description of places which constitutes a digression in the narration.

312 *Jo.* 3.15,17–23 Pusey κῆπος δὲ ὁ χῶρος ἦν τὸ τοῦ ἀρχαίου σχῆμα παραδείσου πληρῶν· ἀνακεφαλαίωσις γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐγίγνετο τῶν τόπων καὶ πάντων, ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, ἐπαναδρομὴ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχαῖον. Ἐν παραδείσῳ μὲν γὰρ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς σκυθρωπῶν συμβέβηκεν ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν κήπῳ δὲ καὶ τὸ Χριστοῦ πάθος δέχεται τὴν ἀρχὴν ἁπάντων ἡμῖν τῶν πάλαι συμβεβηκότων εἰσφέρον τὴν ἐπανόρθωσιν (*the place was a "garden", fulfilling the type of the original paradise. It was a recapitulation, as it were, of places and a return, so to speak, of all things to their original condition. In paradise the beginning of our suffering occurred, and in the garden the suffering of Christ received its beginning, which brought about a restoration from all that happened to us long ago*). See also Livrea (1989), p. 111, on *Par.* 18.6 ἐθήμονος.

μετάβασις occurs, which is a dramatic feature in that it is also a characteristic of tragedy.[313] Nonnus depicts the abrupt change from happiness to suffering all the more powerfully, having presented one situation, symbolised by the beauty of the garden, which is followed in impressively contrasting fashion by another, realised by the approach of the armed men.

Remarkably spectacular is Nonnus' elaboration of John's simple μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων (φανός having become synonym to "lantern" in later Greek),[314] which is transformed into an extended description (adding, of course, new images to the original) of an artfully decorated λύχνος. Livrea's text (with the exception of ll. 18–19 where I accept, along with Scheindler and others, Tiedke's correction to ἄγγος[315]) runs:

***Par.* 18.15–24**	**John 18.3**
ἤλυθεν ἀλλοπρόσαλλος ἐς ἠθάδα κῆπον Ἰούδας τεύχεα καὶ λαμπτῆρας ἔχων, καὶ ὁμόστολος ἀνὴρ χερσὶ πολυσπερέεσσι μετάρσιον ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλῳ λύχνων ἐνδομύχων ἀνεμοσκεπὲς ἄγγος ἀείρων, ἄγγος, ὅπερ δονάκεσσιν ἀμοιβαίοισι συνάπτων πυκνὰ μεριζομένοισι γέρων κυκλώσατο τέκτων, ἀστερόεν μίμημα καὶ εἴκελον ὀξέι κόσμῳ· μεσσοφανὴς ὅθι λύχνος ὁμοζυγέος διὰ κόλπου ὀξὺ φάος πολυωπὸν ὑπὸ σκέπας ἔκτοθι πέμπων, ἀκροφανὴς σελάγιζε πολυσχιδὲς ἀλλόμενον φῶς.	ὁ οὖν Ἰούδας λαβὼν τὴν σπεῖραν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν Φαρισαίων ὑπηρέτας ἔρχεται ἐκεῖ μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων καὶ ὅπλων.
fickle Judas came to the familiar garden bearing arms and lanterns. And the men going together with him, one upon another, with entangled arms hoisted up in the air a vessel[316] guarding from the wind the lamp hidden within it,	So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

313 See Lausberg (1998), § 1192 with references to Aristotle's *Poetics*. Cf. also §§ 1208 and 1209.

314 See Barrett (1978) on John 18.3.

315 Tiedke (1873), p. 47. See also id. (1878), pp. 534–535. Ἄγγος is also accepted by Preller (1918, p. 87), Kuiper (2018), p. 265, Golega (1966), p. 28. Marcellus (1861, p. 248) corrected to ἕρκος and translated "le réceptacle", which, however, would correspond better to ἄγγος. See also next note.

316 Hadjittofi translates "grove" here and in the next line, accepting, with Livrea (1989) and the old editors, the manuscripts' ἄλσος.

(*cont.*)

Par. 18.15–24	John 18.3
a vessel of reeds joined together, one with the other, which an old craftsman made into a circle by splitting and weaving them tight, in imitation of the stars and similar to the swift world; there, a lamp, shining in its middle, through the surrounding hollow sent forth a sharp light from underneath the covering of many holes, a light branching out, which jumped and shone from the edges	

The poet invents an imposing image whereby the men hold up lamps which shine perhaps through their cover (ἄγγος), full of holes, as it is made of reeds,[317] which are imagined as spreading their light in the fashion of the stars that also resemble, as they shine, many small sources of light in the sky. Nonnus imagines that the cover of the lamp was created by an old craftsman (γέρων κυκλώσατο τέκτων). As Livrea observed, the cosmic significance of such an image is evident through the symbolism of τέκτων as the creator of the universe, through the recurring idea of the circle (seen in the context of the Neoplatonic notion of a circular world), and also through the similarity of the present description with the motif of the star-encrusted globe and that of the starry mantle of night, which Nonnus is particularly fond of and repeatedly develops elsewhere, both in the *Dionysiaca* and in the *Paraphrase*.[318]

The repetition ἄγγος … / ἄγγος, in addition to being a rhetorical feature favoured by the poet, especially in the form substantive-substantive + new

317 For a use of ἄγγος as something more flexible than a "bowl", "box", etc. (for which see LSJ s.v.), in that the object can be "woven", cf. Araros fr. 8,4 σχοινόπλεκτον ἄγγος. The scholiast to Aristophanes (on *Vesp.* 674d) gives ἄγγος πλεκτόν as a synonym to κάρταλος, a basket. As for the phrasing in the present passage, other occurrences of ἄγγος constructed with ἀείρειν / ἀερτάζειν in Nonnus are *Dion.* 20.294 and *Par.* 12.12, as Tiedke (1873, p. 47) had early observed.

318 See further Livrea (1989) 119–121, Gigli Piccardi (1985) 171–179 and Ypsilanti (2014), pp. 123–133. For instance, the "old craftsman" with similar phrasing occurs in *Dion.* 24.248 γέρων ἐρράψατο τέκτων and 37.109 γέρων τορνώσατο τέκτων; cf. 36.408 Ἄραψ ὀρθώσατο τέκτων. For parallels with σελάγιζεν in the *Dionysiaca* (e.g. 44.336), see Tiedke (1878), p. 535.

adjective,[319] is a Homeric stylistic device that later poets also frequently use.[320] The equivalence of pattern, expression and metrical position of the *anaphora* between the present passage and Mus. 5–6 λύχνον ἀκούω, / λύχνον might suggest that the two passages are not irrelevant to each other. Musaeus' inspiration derived from Nonnus and occasional similarities in their work were pointed out long ago. The emphasis on the idea of the lamp here is perhaps indicative of the affinity between Nonnus' verses about the lamps of the people who approach Christ and yet more lines of Musaeus' poem.[321] In the Nonnian passage discussed here, as in the case of Musaeus' work, too, much emphasis is laid on visual effects, the most prominent among which being the strong antithesis between the brightness of the lamp(s) and the surrounding darkness. By putting in parallel the light that filters through the reeds of the lantern with the light of the stars, Nonnus adds a further degree of complexity to his favourite image of the starry night and to his elaboration of the contrast between light and darkness that recurs throughout his work.[322] In fact, the opposition between σκότος and φῶς is a strong and *par excellence* ἀντίθετον.[323] Here, apart from the rhetorical effect and the spectacular impression that is achieved, the image has connotations which, going beyond a merely decorative level, exploit the theological symbolisms of light and darkness. While frequently in the *Paraphrase* Christ is seen as light and splendour and stands in opposition to the darkness of vice and ignorance,[324] in the present passage it is the group of dangerous people who approach in order to harm Christ that emits light in the darkness of night. In this case, the light of the torches of the people who will arrest Christ, that is their *material* light, is elaborated so as to stress their foolishness and irrationality in that they use this physical light to eliminate the material night and make their way towards Christ, in ignorance of the fact that Christ is, actually, the real, spiritual light and that their torches do not remove

319 See Golega (1930), p. 58, Livrea (1989), p. 118.

320 Cf. Hom. *Il.* 6.396, 12.95. See further Kost (1971) 141 on Mus. 5–8 λύχνον … / λύχνον.

321 As in Nonnus the ἄγγος is ἀνεμοσκεπές for the λύχνοι, similarly Hero λεπταλέαις αὔρῃσιν ὅθεν πνεύσειεν ἀήτης, / φάρεϊ πολλάκι λύχνον ἐπέσκεπεν (257–258). Leander is burnt from Eros' ἐνδόμυχον πῦρ (246), whilst in Nonnus λύχνοι themselves are ἐνδόμυχοι (ἐνδόμυχον πῦρ recurring *verbatim* in *Dion.* 4.176 and 43.407, as Livrea notes on *Par.* 18.18 ἐνδομύχων). For Musaeus' chronology, probably the second half of the fifth c. A.D., see Kost (1971), p. 16. For Nonnian echoes in Musaeus, see Kost (1971), pp. 26–29.

322 For this antithesis, see Ypsilanti (2014), pp. 128–133. The motif of light and its implicit or explicit contrast with darkness occurs first of all in John's Gospel: see, for instance, Culpepper (1983), pp. 190–192.

323 For the figure, see Lausberg (1998), § 795.

324 Following the line of the Gospel; see further Ypsilanti (2014), pp. 130–132, especially n. 40.

the mental darkness that surrounds them. This point is made by Cyril (3.17,7–24 Pusey), when he comments on John's μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων.[325] Thus the image of the lanterns contributes to the "dematerialisation" of the scene, that is its elevation to a symbolic level which enhances its spiritual interpretation.[326] At the same time, the emphasis on the mass of the hostile crowd who approach Jesus as they hold their lanterns (χερσὶ πολυσπερέεσι), the light of which is also multiplied through the apertures of the lanterns, further magnifies the effect of hostility and danger surrounding Jesus. It also emphasises Jesus' loneliness and the inevitability of His death. Given the military connotations that *arms and lanterns* bear,[327] the sense of impending danger and violence for the central figure is even more powerful.

E.5 *Mary of Magdala Meets the Resurrected Christ*

In Book 20, Nonnus' vivid additions amplify the theme of *Noli Me Tangere*. In describing the encounter between Mary of Magdala and the resurrected Lord, the poet adds scenographic detail that sharpens the scenes and enhances their visual aspect.

***Par.* 20.71–75**	**John 20.16–17**
(…) μεταστρεφθεῖσα δὲ κείνη “ῥαββουνί” κατέλεξε. Θεὸς δ’ ἀνέκοψε γυναῖκα δεξιτερὴν μέλλουσαν ἐς ἄμβροτον εἷμα πελάσσαι. Καί οἱ μῦθον ἔλεξεν· “ἐμῶν μὴ ψαῦε χιτώνων· οὔπω γὰρ μετὰ πότμον ἐμῷ νόστησα τοκῆι”.	στραφεῖσα ἐκείνη λέγει αὐτῷ (Ἑβραϊστί), Ραββουνί (ὃ λέγεται Διδάσκαλε). Λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· Μή μου ἅπτου, οὔπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.
She turned round, and said: "Rabbuni"! But God checked the woman who was about to bring her right hand to the immortal garment. And He addressed this word to her: "Do not touch my tunics; for I have not yet returned to my parent after death".	She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni"! (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father".

325 See also Livrea (1989) on *Par.* 18.16.

326 See the discussion of this passage by Agosti (2014a), pp. 159–160.

327 Cf. Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 40.2 φανοὺς ἔχοντες καὶ λαμπάδας (the soldiers); see further Livrea (1989) on *Par.* 18.16.

To begin with some remarks regarding phrasing and structure, in this passage Nonnus does not explain the lexical borrowing ῥαββουνί.[328] The poet also does not radically rephrase the second part of Jesus' answer: the conjunction οὔπω remains unchanged and the content of the phrase is rendered by the inclusion of the poetic term πότμον, widely used by Homer to indicate an evil destiny, especially death,[329] and by the verb νοστέω, usually employed in the *Odyssey* to designate the return of Odysseus to Ithaca.[330]

Nonnus employs a compound verb to describe the movement of the woman, modifying the Gospel στραφεῖσα as μεταστρεφθεῖσα (maintaining the aorist, but substituting the first type with the second) and Christ is depicted as preventing her from touching Him, with an almost abrupt gesture, expressed by the verb ἀνέκοψε (pushed back, restrained). This is employed in three more verses of the *Paraphrase*, always in contexts in which Christ is interacting with the disciples: in the episode of Mary's anointing of Christ's feet, the verb is employed to describe the gesture of Jesus towards Judas, who complains about the cost of the perfume.[331] On the occasion of the Washing of the Feet, it describes Peter who prevents Jesus from washing his feet,[332] and in the scene of the arrest it is used by Christ as He prevents Peter from killing or wounding the servant of the high priest.[333] In the present passage, the verb ἀνέκοψε underlines the importance and firmness of Christ's prohibition, who stops a human from touching His body before His return to the Father, which will be a "return" that will also unite Him with the disciples on another level, beyond the material world.[334]

In dramatic fashion, Mary is represented in the attempt (μέλλουσαν) to touch the Lord with her right hand. The addition makes the event more theatrical, so to speak, and, at first sight, the gestures of Christ and Mary might suggest influence from Christian iconography on the episode. This assumption cannot be confirmed through any extant artefact, as the earliest evidence of the *Noli Me Tangere* does not date to before the ninth century;[335] however, a similar scene,

328 On which see above, *C. Explanations*.

329 For instance, *Il.* 4.396, 2.359, 6.412, *Od.* 2.250, 19.550, etc.

330 A few examples: *Od.* 1.165, 11.361, 19.258, 24.400, *al.*

331 12.27 Ἰησοῦς ἀνέκοψεν, ἑῷ δ' ἀγόρευε φονῆι.

332 13.29 Ἰησοῦν δ' ἀνέκοψε φίλον σέβας ὄμμασι φαίνων. See Greco (2004), p. 94.

333 18.55 Ἰησοῦς δ' ἀνέκοψε φιλήτορι Πέτρον ἰωῇ. See Livrea (1989) pp. 136–137.

334 For the meaning of these words of Jesus in John, much discussed in scholarship, see, for instance, Van den Bussche (1959), pp. 74–75, Barrett (1978), p. 566 and Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 318–319.

335 Accorinti (1996, ad loc., p. 185) wonders whether Nonnus' description is an autonomous insertion or is influenced by iconography. For the *Noli Me Tangere* in Christian art, see G. Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst* (Gütersloh 1986), vol. 3, *Die Auferstehung*

the *Chairete* representation, does occur earlier.[336] The poet expands on the Johannine text with a description of Mary, who attempts to touch Jesus' vest. This is perhaps a reminiscence of the similar gesture in the miracle of the *αἱμορροοῦσα*, in which the woman is approaching Jesus from behind (Mark 5.27).[337] From a different point of view, Hadjittofi suggests that with the added reference to the resurrected Christ's vest in this scene, Nonnus invites the reader to imagine Christ as wearing divine garments, markedly different from the earthly clothes He was previously wearing, which are epitomised in His burial shroud.[338] The expression ἄμβροτον εἷμα consists of two terms widely employed in hexametric poetry. The following χιτών, in Jesus' answer, forms a *variatio* on the previous εἷμα (possibly echoing *Od.* 6.214 πὰρ δ' ἄρα οἱ φᾶρός τε χιτῶνά τε εἵματ' ἔθηκαν) and it encompasses various connotations that extend beyond

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und Erhöhung Christi, pp. 95–98; E. Kirschbaum, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. 3 (Rome et al. 1971), *Allgemeine Ikonographie L-R*, cols 332–336. L. Réau (*Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, Paris 1957, vol. 2, pp. 556–559) mentions the lipsanotheca of Brescia, dated to the late fourth century, as the first example of this kind of iconography, but the scene is in fact representing the miracle of the woman with the hemorrhage. See C.J. Watson, "The Program of the Brescia Casket", *Gesta* 20 (1981), p. 285, C.B. Tkacz, *The Key to the Brescia Casket: Typology and Early Christian Imagination* (Paris 2001), esp. p. 48.

336 The *Chairete* iconographic episode is the resurrected Christ's greeting to the two Marys (identified in Mat. 27.56 as Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph), based on Mat. 28.9, καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἰησοῦς ὑπήντησεν αὐταῖς λέγων, Χαίρετε. Αἱ δὲ προσελθοῦσαι ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ (*and behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings"! And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him*). It has been suggested that this episode is the precedent of the *Noli Me Tangere* of later iconography, especially of the West; see Apostolos-Cappadona (2005), pp. 135–139, 141. Early examples of the *Chairete* episode are the mosaic with the Women at the Tomb from Sant' Apollinare Nuovo of Ravenna (sixth century), in which the two women stand before the empty tomb and the angel, and the depiction in the Rabbula Codex (Syriac, sixth century), in which the two women kneel before the resurrected Christ and one of them stretches her hands out to Him, in a gesture similar to the later *Noli Me Tangere* gesture. See also Luz (2005), pp. 600–601. The seventh century *Chairete* icon in St. Catherine's monastery of Mount Sinai depicts Mary, Mother of Christ, standing and Mary Magdalene crouching before Christ and stretching out her hands to touch Him in a gesture of worship. A kind of iconographical bridge, so to speak, between Matthew, with his two Marys, and John, with Mary Magdalene only, is a seventh century bronze censer (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond), on which Mary Magdalene alone meets the angel at the empty tomb (see Apostolos-Cappadona [2005], pp. 138–139).

337 Ἀκούσασα περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλθοῦσα ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ ὄπισθεν ἥψατο τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ (*she had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment*).

338 Hadjittofi (2018), pp. 175–176. For the possible, albeit not certain, heterodoxical overtones that might be discerned in such descriptions that point to a dualism of Christ's "bodies", one heavenly and one mortal, see ead., pp. 179–180. See also above, *1. Introduction*, with n. 115.

the plain indication of the actual vest. It may allude to the symbolism that involves the human body metaphorically defined as a tunic,[339] which occurs in Greek philosophy and later in Christian theology.

This section has examined selected instances of Nonnian enrichment through which the Gospel scenes acquire life and an increased dramatic tension, as individuals' appearance, movements and gestures and the features of the landscape are portrayed in picturesque or realistic detail that evoke the reality of various episodes. The investigation has dealt with a selection of impressive depictions, scenes and settings. In these episodes, vivid description is, as usual, combined with theological ideas to a greater or lesser extent, but the episodes' main feature is the sensitive sketching of significant action which offers the narration a particularly strong *enargeia* and which is sometimes linked with the expression of powerful human emotions.

The description of John the Baptist, perhaps influenced by iconography, and his baptism (Book 3), the episode of the servants' announcement to the sick boy's father of the child's cure (Book 4), the description of how the resurrected Lazarus emerges from the tomb (Book 11) and the interaction between Mary Magdalene and the resurrected Christ (Book 20) are examples of scenes in which the presentation of the action is reinforced through the addition of memorable narrative details. In these episodes, the actions of Christ and of John, His predecessor, are presented dramatically directly and / or through people's reactions to them. In this respect, the impact of the resurrection of Lazarus on Lazarus himself and on his environment is probably the most spectacular of all the actions performed by Christ, and Nonnus, as is to be expected, handles them with particular care, focus and imaginative creativity as regards visual effects.

Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (Book 12) and His arrest (two passages from Book 18) are also very important, characteristic episodes. In these, Nonnus dwells on the idyllic appearance of nature and on the visual contrasts that help create tension in the scenes. In the first passage (*Par.* 12.55–65), the picturesque landscape, probably influenced by iconography, too, accords with the crowd's cheerful welcome, but the reader cannot help thinking of the forthcoming destructiveness to be manifested by the same crowd. In the second passage (*Par.* 18.1–10), the pleasant natural setting is in clear discord with the impending action of the soldiers, thereby recalling the same narrative technique of

339 As it has been observed by Accorinti (1996), pp. 189–191 and Livrea (2000), p. 291. For the body as a vehicle of the soul in Neoplatonism, see, for instance, Hadot (1978), pp. 181–187. See also above, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 4. Presentation of Christ in Danger and in Suffering as King*, discussion of *Par.* 19.4–14, end of section and final note.

Greek tragedy (sketching of an insouciant atmosphere before destruction). In the third passage (*Par.* 18.15–24), the antithesis between light and darkness is exploited in the same spirit, albeit freighted with further theological implications.

F Handling of Speech (Direct / Indirect / Dialogue)

When paraphrasing the Johannine text, Nonnus usually respects the structure of his model as far as the rendering of direct and indirect speech and the dialogues is concerned.[340] Nonnus usually retains the changes of speakers in the dialogues and maintains the direct speeches of the Gospel,[341] although he often inserts graphic elements, psychological or physical descriptions and rhetorical devices in the process of *amplificatio*. As has been observed, Biblical narration prefers direct speech, which endows the narrative with immediacy and vividness,[342] and, in this respect, John's Gospel is no exception. Nonnus' richer development of the already vivid Johannine speeches and dialogues is related to the theatricality with which he endows his episodes, discussed in the previous sections. Moreover, the way in which Nonnus handles his material sometimes lays further stress on Johannine theological points and notions.

In this section, we will look at representative examples of the *Paraphrase* and so examine the main ways in which Nonnus alters John's speeches or dialogues: the change from direct to indirect speech and vice-versa, the amplification in direct speech and in dialogue, the comments that the poet inserts before and in the course of dialogues and the persons' gestures that the poet imagines and adds to the Johannine account of their speeches. The latter technique—the most dramatic of all—gives the narrative a particular vividness and is also related to the character sketching which will be discussed later.

In rendering indirect speech, Nonnus usually retains it without altering the structure of the *Vorlage*. A couple of examples are enough to illustrate this approach. In Book 5 the paralytic, just healed by Jesus, goes to the Jews to report *that* he has been cured: 5.53–54 μῦθον ἀναινομένῳ βοόων ζηλήμονι λαῷ / *ὅττι* μιν αὐτοκέλευστος ἀπήμονα θέσπιδι φωνῇ, κτλ. (*shouting at the envious people who*

340 Verhelst (2017) discusses Nonnus' structuring of the direct speeches in the *Dionysiaca* with reference to ancient rhetorical theory and with regard to the poet's mythical narration. The generic limitations in which the paraphrase, which imitates the construction of the Biblical narration, restricts its author places the examination of the speeches in the *Paraphrase* in a different light. As Whitby (2016, p. 238, n. 105) observes, "the conversations of the *Paraphrase* contrast starkly with the long monologues of the *Dionysiaca*".

341 As, for instance, Johnson also observes (2016, p. 277).

342 See Small (2014), p. 70.

refused his word, / that self-bidden, with His divine voice, etc.), corresponding to John 5.15 ἀνήγγειλεν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις *ὅτι* Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὸν ὑγιῆ (*and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him*). Similarly in Book 7 it is reported that many people were talking about Jesus and some of them mantained "*that* he is good": 7.41–42 καὶ πολέες φθέγξαντο θεουδέα μάρτυρα φωνήν / *ὅττι* σοφὸς τελέθει καὶ ὑπέρτερα θαύματα τεύχει (*and many pronounced with testifying, God-fearing voice / that He is wise and fashions superior miracles*) corresponding to John 7.12 οἱ μὲν ἔλεγον *ὅτι* ἀγαθός ἐστιν.

F.1 *Turning Direct to Indirect and Indirect to Direct Speech*

The paraphrast usually retains the direct speech, whilst, of course, rephrasing it, and only in very few instances does he transform it into indirect speech.

Such is the case, for example, with *Par.* 2.23–24, in which Jesus' mother tells the servants of the house of the Wedding at Cana to do whatever Jesus orders them to do:

***Par.* 2.23–24**	**John 2.5**
καὶ Μαρίη δμώεσσιν ἐκέκλετο τοῦτο τελέσσαι, Χριστὸς ὅπερ λέξειεν.	λέγει ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ τοῖς διακόνοις, ὅ τι ἂν λέγῃ ὑμῖν ποιήσατε.
Still, Mary gave orders to the servants to do that which Christ would say.	His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you".

By turning Mary's words into indirect speech (with epic vocabulary which reproduces Homeric commands to slaves),[343] Nonnus is able to use the term "Christ" to describe her order to the servants, something which would be impossible if he used the direct speech. Thus emphasis is laid on Christ's authority, which is actually revealed through this first miracle. Of note here is the recurrence of τελέσσαι in this passage and a few lines later, in *Par.* 2.56 (πρωτοφανὲς τόδε θαῦμα) Ἰησοῦς ἐτέλεσσεν,[344] which renders John's ἐποίησεν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων (2.11); the use of the same verb in these two passages stresses the importance of the miracle at Cana as the starting point of the disclosure of Jesus' identity and mission.

343 *Od.* 6.71, 20.147; see Livrea (2000), p. 190, on *Par.* 2.23.

344 For the connotations of the verb, suggesting perfection (τέλειος) through baptism, see Livrea (2000), p. 231, on *Par.* 2.56.

In the opening lines of Book 10, direct speech is turned into indirect by the insertion of a form of personification, namely the concept of λόγος: the “word” is called (ἔστω) as a “witness”[345] to the Gospel statement (10.1), pronounced by Christ, that asserts that “anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief”.

Par. 10.1–5	**John 10.1**
Μάρτυρος ἀστυφέλικτος ἀμήν, ἀμὴν λόγος ἔστω ὅς κε παραΐξειε θύρην εὐερκέος αὐλῆς ἐνδομύχων προβάτων καὶ ὑπέρτερος ἄλλοθεν ἕρπει εἰς σκολιὴν ἀίδηλος ἐπηλυσίην ἀναβαίνων ληιστὴρ πέλεν οὗτος ἀνὴρ ληίστορι ταρσῷ.	Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὁ μὴ εἰσερχόμενος διὰ τῆς θύρας εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τῶν προβάτων ἀλλὰ ἀναβαίνων ἀλλαχόθεν, ἐκεῖνος κλέπτης ἐστὶν καὶ λῃστής.
Amen, amen, let this be an unshakeable word of testimony: whoever should sneak past the gate of the well-fenced fold of hidden sheep, and creep in from somewhere else high above, unseen, climbing a crooked entrance, that man is a thief on thieving foot.	Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.

In using this rhetorical device, the paraphrast insists on two of the pivotal themes of the Fourth Gospel, Christ as the Verb and the concept of μαρτυρία, which are not present in the corresponding Gospel passage.

Another instance in which direct speech is turned to indirect is *Par.* 20.70–72, where Nonnus reworks the recognition dialogue between the resurrected Christ and Mary Magdalene, who realises who He is:

Par. 20.70–72	**John 20.16**
Ἰησοῦς δ᾽ ἀπάμειπτο χέων ἀρίδηλον ἰωὴν καὶ Μαρίην ἰάχησε. Μεταστρεφθεῖσα δὲ κείνη ῥαββουνὶ κατέλεξε.	λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Μαρία. στραφεῖσα ἐκείνη λέγει αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστί, Ραββουνί.

345 On the concept of *martys* in Nonnus, see Vian (1997).

(*cont.*)

Par. 20.70–72	John 20.16
Jesus replied, pouring forth a clear voice, and cried out: "Mary"! She turned round, and said: "Rabbuni"!	Jesus said to her, "Mary". She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni"!

The Johannine phrasing displays a symmetry created by the analogy between Christ's and Mary's addresses to each other, which consist only in one word, i.e., a name / noun in each address (Μαρία, Ραββουνί; "Mary", "Master"). The accusative Μαρίην, a complement to ἰάχησε, shows that Nonnus uses the indirect speech to render Jesus' utterance, something not reflected in the translation of F. Hadjittofi, cited above, who uses direct speech. Nonnus retains this symmetry while reconstructing it from the correspondence between nouns / names to the correspondence between nouns / names plus verbs: Μαρίην ἰάχησε, ῥαββουνὶ κατέλεξε. In such a reconstruction, Nonnus places the equivalent phrases Μαρίην ἰάχησε and ῥαββουνὶ κατέλεξε in two consecutive lines so that they stand in the same metrical position and occupy the first hemistich which stops at the feminine caesura in both lines. Thus Nonnus both respects a stylistic feature of the original and also produces a structural variation of it. As in the Johannine account, Nonnus' phrasing emphasises the quickness of the recognition at this stage and the reciprocity of feelings of affection between Mary and Christ.

Nonnus again turns John's direct speech to indirect, this time at *Par.* 20.107, where the disciples tell Thomas that they have seen the resurrected Christ:

Par. 20.106–107	John 20.25
καί οἱ ὀπιπευτῆρες ἐπεφθέγξαντο μαθηταί, κοίρανον ὡς ἐνόησαν.	ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί "ἑωράκαμεν τὸν κύριον".
And the disciples who had gazed upon Him told him that they saw the Lord.	So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord".

The importance of the news might be thought to call for the use of the direct speech in the paraphrased text here, in an imitation of the *Vorlage*. The reason why Nonnus turns the disciples' words into a subordinate clause is probably

because the Johannine narrative contains a direct speech in the next lines, which convey Thomas' claim that he must touch Christ's wounds in order to believe. Nonnus respects this direct speech in his rephrasing. He thus seems to be trying to reduce the amount of direct speech in the section, so as to give the appropriate prominence to Thomas' famous demand.

As already mentioned with reference to *Par.* 4.234–235,[346] there are only a few passages in which Nonnus chooses to replace the indirect speech of the *Vorlage* with direct speech. This results in the enhancement of dramatic effect and of realism. One more example of the change from indirect to direct speech comes from the same episode of the sick boy's cure:

Par. **4.239–241**	**John 4.52**
καὶ μίαν εἶν ἑνὶ πάντες ὀπάονες ἴαχον αὐδήν· "υἱέα σὸν λίπε νοῦσος, ὅτε χθιζῇ παρὰ νύσσῃ ἑβδομάτῃ στείχουσα βιοσσόος ἔτρεχεν ὥρη".	εἶπαν οὖν αὐτῷ ὅτι ἐχθὲς ὥραν ἑβδόμην ἀφῆκεν αὐτὸν ὁ πυρετός.
And all the servants together cried out in one voice: "The disease left your son, when yesterday's seventh, life-saving Hour was passing by the turning-post".	And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him".

It has to be observed that in this case it is not entirely clear whether the speech in John is direct or indirect, given the Gospel's typical introduction of direct speech with ὅτι. Still, Nonnus puts a clear direct speech in the servants' mouth, stressing the effect of their answer by causing them to deliver it all together in a loud voice (l. 239).

Another example of such enhancement of the dramatic atmosphere occurs in the report of Caiaphas' advice about Christ's death:

Par. **18.65–68**	**John 18.14**
ὃς Ἑβραίῳ ποτὲ λαῷ ζῆλον ἔχων Χριστοῖο θεημάχον ἴαχε φωνήν· "καλὸν ὑπὲρ λαοῖο θανεῖν ἕνα, μὴ φθόνος ἕρπων Ἑβραίων ὅλον ἔθνος ἑνὸς χάριν ἀνδρὸς ὀλέσσῃ".	(...) ἦν δὲ Καϊάφας ὁ συμβουλεύσας τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι συμφέρει ἕνα ἄνθρωπον ἀποθανεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ.

346 On which see above, *E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 2. Announcement to the Sick Boy's Father of the Child's Cure.*

(*cont.*)

Par. 18.65–68	John 18.14
and who had once cried out to the Hebrew people this God-fighting voice out of envy for Christ: "It is good for one to die on behalf of the people, lest creeping envy destroys the entire nation of the Jews on account of one man".	It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

The paraphrast makes use of the direct speech so as to emphasise the enormity of the crime planned by the chief-priest of the Jews. Nonnus highlights this both by using the adjective θεημάχον in reference to Caiaphas' voice, and by exploiting the fact that the direct speech is, naturally, expressed in the first person.

F.2 *Amplificatio in Direct Speech*

In re-elaborating direct speech, Nonnus normally chooses to retain it, although the paraphrased text usually appears dramatically modified in both rhetorical and structural terms. Since this feature is very common in the *Paraphrase*, one typical example, which clearly shows how Nonnus varies the syntax and enriches the ideas of the original, is enough for the present discussion. At the beginning of Book 14, which is also the beginning of Christ's long instructional address to the disciples, ll. 1–9, corresponding to John 14.1–2, render Jesus' words concerning the mansion that the Master will prepare for the disciples after ascending to heaven.

Par. 14.1–9	John 14.1–2
Μὴ νόος ὑμείων δεδονημένος, ἄστατος εἴη, ἀλλὰ θεῷ καὶ ἐμοὶ πιστεύσατε· θεσπεσίην δὲ υἱέι καὶ γενετῆρι μίαν ξυνώσατε τιμήν. Πολλαὶ δ' ὑψιμέδοντος ἐμοῦ κατὰ δῶμα τοκῆος εἰσὶ μοναὶ στοιχηδὸν ὁμόζυγες· εὐρυτενὴς δε εἰ μὴ πουλυμέλαθρος ἐμὴ πέλε πανδόκος αὐλή, ὑμῖν καί κεν ἔειπον, ὅτι προκέλευθος ὁδεύσω,	Μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία· πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεόν, καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε. Ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρός μου μοναὶ πολλαί εἰσιν· εἰ δὲ μή, εἶπον ἂν ὑμῖν ὅτι πορεύομαι ἑτοιμάσαι τόπον ὑμῖν;

(*cont.*)

***Par.* 14.1–9**	**John 14.1–2**
ὄφρα κεν ἐντύνω πολυχανδέος ἔνδιον αὐλῆς ἄξιον ὑμείων νεοτευχέα χῶρον ὑφαίνων. Do not let your minds be shaken and unsteady, but believe in God and me; one divine honor give in common to the Son and the begetter. In the house of my parent ruling on high there are many quarters joined together in a row; if my court were not stretched wide, with many chambers to receive all, I would have told you that I go ahead of you on the path, in order to prepare the abode of the capacious court and weave a newly made place worthy of you.	Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

In rhetorical terms, Jesus' speech is a farewell oration.[347] Nonnus has increased the length of Johannine verses. The negative imperative of the first phrase is kept, albeit now a figure of *litotes* and rendered by an optative (μὴ ἄστατος εἴη). The noun καρδία is substituted by the term νόος, whilst the rather colloquial ταράσσω is turned into δονέω, a less common verb, albeit often employed in the participle form by Nonnus.[348] A more dramatic rephrasing concerns the second part of the Gospel verse, where the poet retains the same verb, πιστεύετε (avoiding the repetition in the *Vorlage*), modifies it into an aorist imperative and uses the dative (θεῷ καὶ ἐμοί) instead of the prepositional group εἰς + accusative (εἰς τὸν θεόν, καὶ εἰς ἐμέ). Here, Nonnus makes an important exegetical addition, expanding the Gospel text by specifying that the divine honour to be paid, both to the Father and to the Son, must be one and common (μίαν ξυνώσατε τιμήν). This theological clarification stresses the equal importance of the two πρόσωπα, thus avoiding any suspicion of heresy.[349]

347 See, for instance, Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3], pp. 57–58). See also the treatise of Van den Bussche (1959), this passage discussed, from a theological point of view, in pp. 61–65.

348 At least forty-seven occurrences in the Nonnian corpus. The tendency to prefer participial sentences is typical of late antique authors' style. See G. Matino, *Lingua e pubblico nel tardoantico* (Naples 1986), esp. p. 21. More specifically, on the abundance of participles in Nonnus' poetry, see Livrea (1989), pp. 56–57, and id. (2000), pp. 95–96, Agosti (2003), p. 153.

349 See further below, *H. Interpretatio, 2. Trinitarian Theology*, a. *Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity, v. The Father's and the Son's τιμή*.

The poetic rendering of the second Johannine verse follows the original syntactical structure very closely. The negation εἰ μή is maintained, together with the phrase εἶπον ἄν, which is basically reproduced as it is, yet modified into the epic form κεν ἔειπον. The same goes for the conjunction ὅτι, which occurs unchanged, and the final clause (πορεύομαι ἑτοιμάσαι), which is made more explicit by the insertion of the conjunction ὄφρα + conjunctive (ἐντύνω). The paraphrast elaborates on the model through synonymic amplification, replacing the Johannine verb πορεύομαι with the expression προκέλευθος ὁδεύσω, and by inserting the image of a πολυχανδής αὐλή. A similar phrasing (also in the genitive) describes the enclosure in which the sheep of the Good Shepherd are kept at *Par.* 10.24 (πανδόκος εἰμὶ θύρη προβάτων πολυχανδέος αὐλῆς), the idea of the "yard which can take many" being a Nonnian insertion there, too. Interestingly, πανδόκος αὐλή, a variation of the πανδόκος θύρη of 10.24, designates God's abode, opened to the believers, at *Par.* 14.6, as πολυχανδής αὐλή also does two lines later, at 14.8. It has been observed that these references to the soul's dwelling in God's palace in the afterlife bear Neoplatonic overtones, combined with Christianity in the Alexandrian milieu.[350] In rendering the plain Gospel τόπον, paraphrased into χῶρον, Nonnus employs the mildly metaphorical verb ὑφαίνω (meaning "to prepare") and the Homeric hapax νεοτευχής, which describes the newness of the mansion that clearly designates the Paradise here. The similar νεότευκτος describes Christ's sepulchre at *Par.* 19.217, which also points to the Paradise.[351] Νεοτευχής recurs in another two instances of the *Paraphrase*: at 9.33, in the context of the miracle of the blind man, where it describes the "new" eyes created by Jesus (ὀφθαλμοὺς τελέων νεοτευχέας), and in the last Book, to stress the "novelty" of the Gospel (*Par.* 21.142 βίβλους τοσσατίας νεοτευχέας).[352] In all instances, then, in Nonnus, νεοτευχής expresses the novelty of Christ's message to humanity while also alluding to Paradise, and here and in the Good Shepherd parable πανδόκος and πολυχανδής designate the enormous capacity of the place which the Lord's people occupy. In other words, Nonnus' rephrasing of Christ's words highlights the hopeful freshness of a unique occasion on which God's abode is opened to everyone.

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350 Being parallel, for instance, to Synesius' *H.* 1.707–712 (δός με, φυγοῖσαν / σώματος ἄταν, / θοὸν ἅλμα βαλεῖν / ἐπὶ σὰς αὐλάς, / ἐπὶ σοὺς κόλπους) and 2.286–292. See further Livrea (1989), p. 192 (on *Par.* 19.168 βασιλήιος αὐλή), and Nenci (2014), p. 110.

351 See Nenci (2014), p. 113.

352 On this rare epithet, appearing in Timotheus *Pers.* 216 and Theocr. 1.27–28, to underline technical innovations in poetry, see Agosti (2004), pp. 18–19.

F.3 *Amplificatio in Dialogue*

As for dialogues, Nonnus normally follows the sequence of changes of speakers as presented in the *Vorlage*, while amplifying them. The following passage illustrates how the poet, whilst respectfully retaining the dialogic structure as it appears in the Gospel, expands it by combining diverse paraphrastic techniques, such as accumulation of synonyms, *interpretatio* and insertion of various rhetorical devices.

Par. **10.111–121**

Ἰησοῦς δ᾽ ἀπάμειπτο χέων πολυμεμφέα φωνήν·
"ἡμετέρου καλὰ πολλὰ παρ᾽ ὑψίστοιο τοκῆος
ὑμέας ἔργα δίδαξα, τάπερ μάθον. Ἀντὶ τίνος δὲ
ἔργου θεσπεσίου φονίην τίνοντες ἀμοιβὴν
εἰς ἐμὲ λαϊνέοισιν ἐθωρήχθητε βελέμνοις";
Λαοὶ δ᾽ ἀντιάχησαν ἀμοιβαδίς· "οὐ χάριν ἔργου
καλοῦ λύσσαν ἔχοντες ἀολλίζοντο πολῖται,
ὄφρα σε πετρήεντι κατακρύψωσι χιτῶνι,
ἀλλὰ βαρυγλώσσοιο τεοῦ χάριν ἀνθερεῶνος,
ὅττι χαμαιγενέος μεθέπων βλάστημα γενέθλης
θνητὸς ἐών, ἐνέπεις θεὸς ἔμμεναι". (…)

Jesus replied, pouring forth a much-blaming voice:
"From my parent on high many and good
are the deeds which I taught you, those which I learnt. In return for which
divine deed, paying back a murderous recompense,
have you armed yourselves against me with stony darts"?
The multitudes cried out in response reciprocally: "It was not due to
a good deed that the citizens started to gather in frenzy,
so that they may conceal you under a rocky tunic,
but due to your grievous-tongued throat,
because, though you are the offshoot of an earth-born race,
though you are mortal, you claim to be God".

John 10.32–33

Ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Πολλὰ ἔργα καλὰ ἔδειξα ὑμῖν ἐκ τοῦ πατρός· διὰ ποῖον αὐτῶν ἔργον ἐμὲ λιθάζετε; Ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· περὶ καλοῦ ἔργου οὐ λιθάζομέν σε ἀλλὰ περὶ βλασφημίας, καὶ ὅτι σὺ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν.

Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me"? The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God".

Nonnus opts for two different solutions to render the same Gospel verb (ἀπεκρίθη in 32 and ἀπεκρίθησαν in 33), in accordance with the principle of *variatio*. In the first instance the verb he employs is the epic ἀπάμειπτο (l. 111) followed by a metaphorical participle, χέων, and by the adjective πολυμεμφέα,[353] which creates alliteration with φωνήν. In ll. 112–113, Nonnus retains certain elements from the Johannine text, namely πολλὰ ἔργα καλά, although not in the same order. The Gospel ἐκ τοῦ πατρός becomes παρ' ὑψίστοιο τοκῆος (l. 112) a phrase which elevates the simple πατήρ and, always in epic terms, emphatically places it in the magnificent superhuman sphere where it belongs. The verb ἔδειξα ("I showed") is split into two verbs, δίδαξα, τάπερ μάθον ("I taught what I learned"), adding further emphasis and elaboration to the phrase ἐκ τοῦ πατρός of the original. Thus, the relative clause τάπερ μάθον refers to the Son's close relationship with the Father and to the Son's conveying of the Father's message to humanity, contributing again to exegesis. The metaphorical expression εἰς ἐμὲ λαϊνέοισιν ἐθωρήχθητε βελέμνοις (l. 115) which includes the verb θωρήσσω, "to arm oneself against someone", seems to anticipate the euphemistic metaphor indicating death occurring below (l. 118 ὄφρα σε πετρήεντι κατακρύψωσι χιτῶνι).[354] In ll. 115–116 Nonnus employs a number of rhetorical devices in order to rework the rather direct question asked by Christ in the Gospel. The term ἔργον is kept, even though it is introduced with a different preposition (ἀντί) and it is in enjambment with τίνος (τίνος δὲ / ἔργου). The adjective φονίην represents a *hypallage* and the participle, τίνοντες, referring to ἀμοιβήν, has a slight metaphorical meaning.

At l. 116, the verb replacing the Gospel's ἀπεκρίθησαν is ἀντιάχησαν. The Jews "cry against" Christ. This stresses the violence of the Jews' intentions, in that their response is introduced with a verb which in this context carries more aggressive connotations than the neutral ἀποκρίνομαι of the Gospel.[355] In his paraphrase of the answer given by the Jews (116–121), the poet employs several figures of speech: ἔργου is in enjambment with καλοῦ, the verb ἀολλίζοντο introduces a final clause which is, in turn, an euphemism, and πετρήεντι κατακρύψωσι χιτῶνι, including the metaphorical adjective "stony", emphasises the idea of the imminent stoning. This euphemistic expression draws on a

353 The adjective is considered by Peek (1968–1975, s.v.) as a Nonnian coinage (the other three occurrences being *Dion.* 4.35, 39.272, 40.10), but, as Accorinti (2004, p. 74) notes, it also occurs in a Mysian epigraph of the first century A.D. (M. Barth, J. Stauber, *Inschriften von Mysia und Troas*, *Olympene*, Version 25.8.1993 [Ibycus]. Packard Humanities Institute, CD 7 1996, Munich, n. 2753,2 δαπάνας πολυμενφέας). Much later, the term is employed by Eustathius (*De capta Thessalonica* 46.6).

354 See also above, on *A. Periphrasis*.

355 Despite being rare, the verb ἀντιαχέω is employed several times by Nonnus (fifteen times in the *Paraphrase* and four in the *Dionysiaca*), not necessarily with hostile implications,

Homeric metaphor alluding to death: *Il.* 3.56–57 ἦ τέ κεν ἤδη / λάϊνον ἕσσο χιτῶνα κακῶν ἕνεχ' ὅσσα ἔοργας.[356] The metaphor is followed by a *synecdoche*, ἀνθερεῶνος, in anastrophe with its adjective, βαρυγλώσσοιο. Jesus' "heavy-tongued chin" has probably a euphemistic function, as it enables the paraphrast to avoid the term βλασφημία, which refers to Christ in the Gospel text. A mild *hyperbaton* is formed by χαμαιγενέος ... γενέθλης, which depends on the metaphorical βλάστημα, all the forms now creating a *periphrasis* with the verbal form they surround, μεθέπων. The whole line elaborates on the Jews' mistaken assumption that Jesus is a mere human being. Interestingly, χαμαιγενής, an adjective frequently used by Nonnus in the *Dionysiaca*, is employed in the *Paraphrase* so as to underline the "reality of the human sphere" which opposes Christ.[357] As is the case in archaic poetry and Pindar,[358] where the adjective is found in the phrase χαμαιγενέων ἀνθρώπων, here, too, χαμαιγενής is used in the context of an opposition / differentiation between human and divine and marks the contrast between the two. The final part of the Jews' answer is also stylistically changed, as ἄνθρωπος becomes θνητός, which stresses the idea of mortality, and the general meaning of the sentence is slightly modified as well, since the plain Johannine ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν is substituted by ἐνέπεις θεὸς ἔμμεναι, which is more subtle and adds an epic tone to the line.

All in all, in Nonnus' rephrasing of the Jews' answer to Jesus, their collective wrath (cf. l. 117, λύσσαν ἔχοντες ἀολλίζοντο) and dangerousness are repeatedly and strongly emphasised. Nonnus also elaborates the Jews' belief that Jesus is human and nothing more, so stressing how they misunderstand His nature. Χαμαιγενής and βαρύγλωσσος indicate how strongly the Jews are mistaken. Χαμαιγενής is poignantly opposed to Jesus' true origin: Jesus' message comes παρ' ὑψίστοιο τοκῆος, as Jesus has just told the Jews (*Par.* 10.112), and Jesus comes from God (John 8.42 ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἥκω, *I came from God and I am here*). John elsewhere clarifies the point that the Son of Man comes from heaven.[359] Thus, John describes Christ's double nature through the paradox-

as in this case, but also in the sense of "speaking aloud". Before Nonnus, the verb occurs at Ap. Rh. 2.828, 4.76 and Greg. Naz. *AP* 8.206,3. It also appears at *Orph. Arg.* 819, 829.

356 *Else wouldest thou ere this have donned a coat of stone by reason of all the evil thou hast wrought* (tr. Murray); the resemblance between the Homeric and the Nonnian passage was early observed (Abram 1623, p. 51). A similar motif occurs in Aeschylus, where the concept of death is represented through the image of a tunic made of earth: *Ag.* 872 χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβών.

357 *Par.* 12.174, 15.70. See Caprara (2005), pp. 193–194, on *Par.* 4.63.

358 Hes. *Th.* 879, *H. Hom. Cer.* 352, *Ven.* 108, Theogn. 870, Pind. *Pyth.* 4.98.

359 John 3.13 καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (*no one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man*). For a further investigation of the connection between heavenly and earthly things through Jesus in this statement and in other Johannine passages, see Barrett (1978), pp. 212–213,

ical coexistence of ἄνθρωπος and οὐρανός in his account of Christ's origin, an idea that the Jews are unable to grasp, since in their mind, as in pagan Greek poetry, the two are clearly separated, as the connotations of χαμαιγενής imply. Now, βαρύγλωσσος, used by Nonnus only here, is also ironic, since Jesus' words which the Jews find "heavy" (standing for John's "blasphemous") are actually words of "spirit and life".[360] The very rare adjective is used once in the *Septuagint*, to designate grievous or unintelligible tongue of people who do not speak the same language as the Jews.[361] Significantly, the content of the section in *Ezekiel* parallels that in both the Johannine and Nonnian passages. In the passage from *Ezekiel*, the Jews do not *want* to understand the prophet's message and, although they do understand his language, it is as if they spoke a different language (as if they were βαρύγλωσσοι) because of their reluctance to *listen* to him: the true reason for their rejection is that they are alienated from God.[362] Equally alienated are the Jews of John, who do not listen to Jesus, because they do not want to accept the divine message.[363] Being (or behaving like) βαρύγλωσσοι themselves, they foolishly attribute this feature to the One sent by God, their thoughtless attitude thus being comparable to that of their ancestors. The connotations of the vocabulary Nonnus employs in his reworking of this dialogue magnifies the Johannine concept of the huge difference in intellect and comprehension which sets apart Jesus from the Jews and underscores the fateful events that this gap will lead to.

F.4 *Introductory and Other "Comments" in Dialogic Speech Exchanges*

A particularly noteworthy feature in Nonnus' use of *amplificatio* in his reworking of the Johannine persons' exchange of words is the addition of comments, in the form of adjectives, verbal forms and whole phrases. Admittedly, such

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Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), pp. 393–394, Brodie (1993), p. 199. For a discussion of the "Son of Man" in the Synoptics and in John, see Kittel, Friedrich, Bromiley (1985), pp. 1106–1109. For a discussion of the Nonnian rendering of this Johannine verse (*Par.* 3.65–68) from a theological point of view, with emphasis on the union of the Logos to the flesh, see Rotondo (2014), pp. 608–609.

360 John 6.63 τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λελάληκα ὑμῖν πνεῦμά ἐστιν καὶ ζωή ἐστιν (*the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life*).

361 *Ez.* 3.5 διότι οὐ πρὸς λαὸν βαθύχειλον καὶ βαρύγλωσσον σὺ ἐξαποστέλλῃ πρὸς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (*for you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel*).

362 See Eichrodt (1970), p. 65.

363 Cf. Jesus' words to the Jews in John 5.42–43: ἀλλὰ ἔγνωκα ὑμᾶς ὅτι τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς. Ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρός μου καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετέ με (*but I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me*) with the discussion of Brodie (1993), p. 254.

added comments are present in most instances of the paraphrastic reworking of the persons’ speeches. When they occur in dialogues, however, they are more interesting since they highlight in general terms the dynamics of the situation described and the interaction of the persons involved in it. These extra terms offer a clearer picture of the atmosphere in which the dialogue takes place and also connect the scene to information drawn from other passages of the Gospel and from other texts. They also depict the state of mind and the psychological traits of the people who participate in the dialogue.[364]

As regards the *Dionysiaca*, it has been observed that even semi-formulaic phrases used by Nonnus as an introduction to a person’s speech show the intention of the speaker.[365] Now, in the *Paraphrase*, especially when these additions occur *in* the speech, representing the person’s words (rather than when they surround the speech, in which case they belong to its introductory or closing comment), they contribute *par excellence* to the making of *ethopoea*. For all the limitations placed on Nonnus’ ability to develop characters that already exist, his elaboration of the words of John’s characters and his additions to John’s account of these words gives the characters extra dimensions. Thus these additions can be indeed regarded as contributing to the characters’ *ethopoea*.[366] In this section, Nonnus’ technique of insertion of comments in dialogues will be examined in two representative passages of the *Paraphrase*.

Characteristic examples of such comments occur in the disciples’ questions and Christ’s answers when, after the Last Supper, the disciples have been told that their Master will die and be resurrected, in Books 13 and 14. The final lines of Book 13, which convey Peter’s dialogue with Christ, are as follows:

***Par.* 13.145–160**	**John 13.36–38**
Χριστοῦ δ’ ὡς κλύε μῦθον ἑκὰς μέλλοντος ὁδεύειν,	Λέγει αὐτῷ Σίμων
μειλιχίοις ὀάροισι φιλήκοος ἔννεπε Σίμων·	Πέτρος· κύριε, ποῦ ὑπά-
“κοίρανε, πῇ σπεύδεις; τίνα μοι, τίνα χῶρον ἱκάνεις”;	γεις; Ἀπεκρίθη [αὐτῷ]
Ἰησοῦς δ’ ἀπάμειπτο καὶ εἰρομένῳ φάτο Πέτρῳ·	Ἰησοῦς· ὅπου ὑπάγω οὐ

364 Such instances are also discussed below, on *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*; *1. Peter*; *3. Judas*.

365 See Verhelst (2017), pp. 35–36 with n. 91. Verhelst draws attention to the participle παρηγορέων / -ουσα which often appears in the introduction of consolatory speeches.

366 For *ethopoea*, see below, *5. Gestures accompanying the Direct Speech* and *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, *2. Mary of Magdala*.

(*cont.*)

***Par.* 13.145–160**	**John 13.36–38**
“οὐ δύνασαι προθέοντος, ὅπη ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπείγω, ξυνὸς ὀπισθοκέλευθος ἐμὴν ὁδὸν ἄρτι περῆσαι· ἀλλὰ παλινδίνητος ὅτε χρόνος ὥριος ἔλθῃ, αὐτὸς ὁμαρτήσειας ἐς ὕστερον”. Εἶπε δὲ Σίμων· “οὐ δύναμαι ταχύγουνος ὀπισθοπόρῳ ποδὶ βαίνων ὑμετέρης ἀβάτοιο ταμεῖν κενεῶνα κελεύθου; Καὶ ψυχὴν ἐθέλουσαν ὑπὲρ σέθεν ἐγγυαλίξω”. Ἰησοῦς δ’ ἀδόκητον ἔπος μυθήσατο Πέτρῳ· “ψυχὴν ὑμετέρην ἐμέθεν χάριν αὐτίκα θήσεις; τρὶς δὲ μόνης δασπλῆτι μιῆς ἐνὶ νυκτὸς ἀνάγκῃ Χριστὸν ἀπαρνήσαιο, πρὶν αὐχένα κυρτὸν ἀείρας ὀξὺ μέλος κλάγξειεν ἐγερσιβόητος ἀλέκτωρ”.	δύνασαί μοι νῦν ἀκολουθῆσαι, ἀκολουθήσεις δὲ ὕστερον. Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος, Κύριε, διὰ τί οὐ δύναμαί σοι ἀκολουθῆσαι ἄρτι; Τὴν ψυχήν μου ὑπὲρ σοῦ θήσω. Ἀποκρίνεται Ἰησοῦς· τὴν ψυχήν σου ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ θήσεις; Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἀλέκτωρ φωνήσῃ ἕως οὗ ἀρνήσῃ με τρίς.
But when he heard Christ’s report, that He was about to go far away, Simon who listened carefully said with sweet words: “Lord, whither do you hasten? To which, tell me, to which land will you come”? Jesus replied, and said to questioning Peter: “Whither I urge the step of my foot you are not able to outrun me and cross into my course at present, following on my path with me; but when the opportune, whirling time comes, you shall join me in the future”. And Simon said: “Am I not able, marching on quick knees and following you with my foot, to cut through the space of that path which you have not yet trodden? My own life I will willingly lay down for your sake”. Jesus then told Peter an unexpected word: “Your own life you will immediately give up for my sake? Thrice in the frightful necessity of one night alone you shall deny Christ, before the rooster, lifting up his bent neck, should shriek his high-pitched tune, awakening men with his cry”.	Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going”? Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward”. Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you”. Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times”.

The simple Johannine introduction of Peter's address to Christ, consisting in the verb λέγει, is transformed by Nonnus (145–146) into a comment on Peter's state of mind and on the reason why he asked his question. In the previous Gospel sections (13.33–35) the disciples learn that Jesus will depart from the world. In Nonnus, Peter, who is φιλήκοος, "fond of hearing", is curious about the place to which the Master will go, when he hears the words of Christ (l. 145 Χριστοῦ δ' ὡς κλύε μῦθον) concerning this future "travel" (ἑκὰς μέλλοντος ὁδεύειν), and asks his question with "gentle converse" (l. 146 μειλιχίοις ὀάροισι). Such additions add psychological touches to the portrayal of Peter and stress his anxiety at the news that Jesus is to leave the disciples. It therefore emphasises Peter's devotion to, and especial love for, Christ, an idea which will be further elaborated next in the Gospel passage.

'Οάροισι and φιλήκοος lay more emphasis on Peter's love of conversation, since at this point he starts a dialogue which appears, albeit with slight differences, in all Gospels. It is among the most well-known passages in the Gospels, since it is important for the readers' understanding of the first disciple's emotions, virtues and weaknesses, and ends with Christ's famous prediction of Peter's triple denial of the Master before cockcrow. Μειλιχίοις ὀάροισι stresses right at the outset Peter's love for Christ.[367] Peter's anxiety is moreover underlined by the repetition of the question, "Where are you going"?[368] in the two hemistichs of l. 147, in each one with different phrasing, and, on top of this, by means of the repetition of τίνα in the question of the second hemistich of this verse. In the introduction to Christ's answer (l. 148), the poet adds the participle εἰρομένῳ to qualify Πέτρῳ, with which he replaces the Johannine αὐτῷ (in a probable reading of John's text). Nonnus therefore focuses once more on Peter's curiosity and fondness for talk and, by extension, for the knowledge acquired through talk. Nonnus probably took this idea from Cyril.[369] John Chrysostom also comments on Peter's exceptional boldness, as

367 As Greco (2004), p. 169 (on *Par.* 13.146) notes.

368 See Rotondo (2017c), p. 202. Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3], p. 55) observed that Peter's question in John 13.36 reflects his real concern, contrasted to the Jews' ironic question (ποῦ οὗτος μέλλει πορεύεσθαι ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐχ εὑρήσομεν αὐτόν;) in John 7.35. Also associating the exchange between Jesus and the Jews in John 7.33–36 with this one between Jesus and Peter in John 13.36–38, Ridderbos (1997, p. 477) observes that Peter implies that "certainly he and the other disciples are not to be equated with 'the Jews'"!

369 Commenting on John 13.36 λέγει αὐτῷ Σίμων Πέτρος Κύριε, ποῦ ὑπάγεις (*Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?"*), Cyril remarks (2.391,11–15 Pusey): φιλοπευστεῖ δὴ πάλιν ἐκ φιλομαθείας ὁ Πέτρος, καὶ περιεργάζεται τοῦ λόγου τὴν δύναμιν συνεὶς μὲν οὔπω, κατὰ τὸ εἰκός, ὡς ἔχει τὸ εἰρημένον, θερμοτάτην γεμὴν εἰς τὸ δεῖν ἕπεσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ τὴν προθυμίαν εἰσφέρων (*Peter, with his usual curiosity, wants to know more, and he busies himself with the mean-*

he is the only disciple who dares protest when he hears from Jesus the prediction of the events to come, that is, Jesus' death and Resurrection, in Mat. 16.22.[370]

Jesus' answer and Peter's next question and assertion of his uttermost devotion to the Master are loaded with terms that elaborate on the idea of movement, to render the Gospel's ὑπάγω and the forms of the verb ἀκολουθεῖν (repeated twice in Jesus' words and once in Peter's). Προθέοντος and ὅπῃ ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπείγω (l. 149) render Christ's ὑπάγω of John, ὀπισθοκέλευθος and ὁδὸν ἄρτι περῆσαι (l. 150) develop ἀκολουθῆσαι and ὁμαρτήσειας (l. 152) stands for ἀκολουθήσεις. In turn, the simple infinitive ἀκολουθῆσαι in Peter's answer is amplified in the phrase ταχύγουνος ὀπισθοπόρῳ ποδὶ βαίνων / ὑμετέρης ἀβάτοιο ταμεῖν κενεῶνα κελεύθου (153–154). With these terms Nonnus repeats, as he often does, the idea of swiftness and the idea of "feet" and "road". By means of these repetitions, the poet emphasises how close Jesus is to the fulfilment of His heavenly mission. He emphasises, too, Peter's eagerness, at least as far as intention is concerned, to follow the road that Jesus has to take, difficult though it may be, without, of course, fully understanding all the implications.[371] In doing so, Nonnus underscores the distance between frail human will, illusion and partial comprehension of the world on the one hand and divine omniscience and resolution on the other.[372]

Peter's mistaken appraisal of the strength of his own feelings and the gap between what he believes about his disposition and the extent of his loyalty to Christ and his real character and the actual degree of his loyalty to Christ[373] are

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ing of the statement. He does not yet understand what the statement means, it seems, but he brings to bear his fervent desire to follow Christ). See further Greco (2004), p. 169 (on *Par.* 13.146, φιλήκοος).

370 See below, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 1. Peter*.

371 Cyril (2.395,16–23 Pusey) comments that Peter is perhaps imagining that Jesus' intends to travel to unfriendly and dangerous peoples: οἶμαι δὲ δεῖν ἐν λόγοις εἰπεῖν, οὔπω τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἀκριβῶς ἐπιστήσας τὸν νοῦν, οἴεται τάχα που τὸν Κύριον, ἢ πρός τινας τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν ἀγριωτέρας διαβήσεσθαι κώμας, ἢ καὶ εἰς ἑτέρους οἴχεσθαι λαούς, οἳ τοσοῦτον ἐξ ἀκριβοῦς ἀκοῆς ἀποδιακείσονται πρὸς τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ ῥηθήσεσθαι μέλλοντα, ὡς μικρὰ μὲν κομιδῇ πρὸς τὰ τῶν ἄλλων Ἰουδαίων τολμήματα, πολὺ δὲ λίαν ἡμερωτάτην τὴν ἐνοῦσαν τοῖς Φαρισαίοις ἀποδεῖξαι μανίαν (*Peter does not yet understand the precise meaning of Jesus' words. Perhaps he thinks that the Lord is about to travel to wilder villages of Judea or even to foreign peoples, who, after carefully listening to what he is going to say, will so violently dissent from it that the madness of the Pharisees will seem downright gentle in comparison with the audacity of the other Jews*). See Greco (2004), p. 172 (on *Par.* 13.153) and the further discussion of the episode by Blaine (2007), pp. 76–79.

372 For this situation in John, see, for instance, Van den Bussche (1959), p. 60.

373 For this distance between Peter's understanding and his real will, revealed by Jesus, in

underlined by Nonnus, who adds ἀδόκητον ἔπος μυθήσατο (l. 156) which stands for the Johannine ἀπεκρίθη. This phrase introduces Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial, and the adjective "unexpected" (ἀδόκητον) brings in the idea of surprise[374] that this prediction causes. Such a description of the effect that Jesus' prediction has on Peter at this point is absent from the Gospel. In adding it, the poet tells us once again that Peter never believed that his conduct towards Christ would be such as Christ describes, and so emphasises again Peter's lack of self-knowledge. The addition of the dative δασπλῆτι μιῆς ἐνὶ νυκτὸς ἀνάγκῃ at 158 gives Peter a hint about and anticipates, for the reader, the circumstances under which the denial will take place. Furthermore, it magnifies the gravity of Peter's fault, as the dreadfulness of the Master's Passion[375] is contrasted sharply with the disciple's denial (Χριστὸν ἀπαρνήσαιο, which follows immediately next, at 159. Note that the emphatic Χριστόν, which Nonnus' Jesus uses as He speaks in the third person, replaces the Johannine pronoun με at 13.38). Furthermore, the Gospel's τρίς is juxtaposed to the "one" night which Nonnus introduces, to stress the point that Peter will repeat his denial.[376] Nonnus stresses the error and thus the grievousness of the error, since this will occur during the *one*, momentous and uniquely grim, night of Christ's Passion.

Similar observations can be made regarding the continuation of the exchange between Jesus and disciples in the next Book.

***Par.* 14.13–20**	**John 14.4–6**
(…) "ἐμὴν ὁδὸν ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί".	καὶ ὅπου [ἐγὼ] ὑπάγω
ἔννεπεν· εἰσαΐων δὲ διώνυμος ἴαχε Θωμᾶς,	οἴδατε τὴν ὁδόν. Λέγει
ὃν Δίδυμον γενετῆρες ἐφήμισαν, ἐξότε κούρῳ	αὐτῷ Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμε-
ὀγδοάτης ἀνέτελλε φιλοτμήτου δρόμος ἠοῦς·	νος Δίδυμος· Κύριε, οὐκ
"οὔπω, ἄναξ, ἐδάημεν, ὅπῃ ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπείγεις·	οἴδαμεν ποῦ ὑπάγεις· πῶς
μέτρα πόθεν δυνάμεσθα μαθεῖν ἀκίχητα κελεύθου";	δυνάμεθα τὴν ὁδὸν εἰδέ-

John, see Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), p. 56. Peter's sporadic misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching in John is overemphasised by Droge (1990).

374 For the use of the adjective in previous literature, see Greco (2004), pp. 173–174 (on *Par.* 13.156).

375 For δασπλής as an adjective particularly relevant to the description of the Passion, see Greco (2004), p. 175 (on *Par.* 13.158).

376 The emphatic juxtaposition is noticed by Greco (2004), p. 174, on *Par.* 13.158.

(*cont.*)

***Par.* 14.13–20**	**John 14.4–6**
Ἰησοῦς δ' ἰάχησε φιλήκοον ἄνδρα διδάσκων· "ζωὴ ἀληθείη τε καὶ ὄρθιός εἰμι πορείη".	ναι; Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή.
"You yourselves know my path". He said; and having listened, two-named Thomas cried out, the one his begetters had called 'Didymus' when the eighth course of dawn, the one appointed for circumcision, had risen up for the boy: "We do not yet know, Lord, whither you urge the step of your foot. Whence can we learn the measures of your unattainable course"? Jesus cried out, teaching the attentive man: "I am the life, the truth, and the straight road".	"And you know the way to where I am going". Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way"? Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life".

This is Thomas' turn to ask for clarifications about the path which Christ will soon follow. As in the previous passage, the Johannine ὑπάγειν is again rendered with ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπείγειν in Thomas' words (l. 17). This consistency in the rendition of ὑπάγειν, referring to Jesus' departure, stresses further the idea of Jesus' quick and decisive movement in the direction of the path that still remains unknown to the disciples. Furthermore, the Thomas of Nonnus adds a meaningful attribute to the κέλευθος, which corresponds to John's ὁδός: μέτρα … ἀκίχητα κελεύθου (l. 18). While the simple Johannine "road" in Thomas' words lacks any implication which would point to the difficulty of reaching this "road", the Nonnian μέτρα ἀκίχητα recalls Christ's repeated assertion in Book 13 that the disciples cannot follow this way for the moment (John 13.33, 13.36). In particular, the expression takes up the phrase ἀκίχητον … δρόμον ἀτραπιτοῖο (13.137) with which Nonnus describes Christ's path.[377] It also recalls 13.154 ἀβάτοιο … κελεύθου. In the *Paraphrase* the adjective ἀκίχητος is often attributed to Christ, in the phrase Ἰησοῦς (δ') ἀκίχητος in the nominative or accusative.[378] Thus the adjective, meaning "inaccessible" and "impossible to follow",[379] regularly underscores the distance and partial detachment of Christ from earthly

377 As Nenci (2014, p. 131) observed.

378 *Par.* 7.123, 8.191, 10.139, 12.2; cf. 14.53 μολεῖν ἀκίχητος ἐπείγομαι εἰς γενετῆρος.

379 See Greco (2004), p. 163 (on *Par.* 13.136).

affairs. It also recalls the Gospel's profoundly significant opening, as regards doctrine, where Nonnus gives John's Λόγος the adjectives ἄχρονος and ἀκίχητος, the latter implying that the divine depth is beyond the reach of human understanding.[380] Ἀκίχητος in this crucial position and its recurrence in the aforementioned passages of the narrative constantly point towards the divine aspect of Jesus and to the unapproachable quality of the notions that the disciples' human minds find difficult to grasp. However, the difficulty in comprehension that ἀκίχητος implies and that the repeated mention of Jesus' lonely path indicates is lessened thanks to the reference to the teacher-pupil relationship between Christ and disciples. Christ's famous answer to Thomas "I am the way and the truth and the life" is introduced at l. 19 with a sentence, added by Nonnus, in which Jesus is described as "teaching" (διδάσκων) and Thomas is described as "fond of hearing" (φιλήκοον), an adjective also attributed to Peter in the end of Book 13, just discussed. With these terms, Nonnus suggests that the gap between unapproachable divinity and mystery of the divine plan on the one hand and humans' imperfect intellectual capacities on the other can and is actually bridged through Christ's teaching which, of course, presupposes human receptivity to it and which the disciples, as φιλήκοοι, do possess.

It is no coincidence that later in the same book, Jesus is asked one more question by another disciple, Judas, son of Jacob, and Nonnus introduces Christ's words with the phrase ὁμόφρονα φῶτα διδάσκων (*teaching the likeminded man*, 14.88), referring to Christ, while John simply says ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ (14.23). Christ's quality as a teacher is again highlighted, as is Judas' position on the same side as Christ. Judas, like all the disciples except for Judas Iscariot, "thinks in a similar way" to Christ (ὁμόφρονα) not because he fully realises the content of the Master's teaching, but because, unlike Christ's opponents (cf. ἄφρονες ἀρχιερῆες, 11.188), he does have a disposition that enables him accept the divine message and will eventually be in a position to realise it. At *Par.* 14.88, Nonnus attributes ὁμόφρονα to Judas, as he introduces Christ's answer to this disciple. Two lines earlier, Judas attributed the same adjective to Jesus. Judas asks why Jesus' form (εἶδος) will be revealed only to them rather than to the whole world, using the participle ὁμοφρονέων to describe Christ: πῶς τεὸν εἶδος ὁμοφρονέων ἀναφαίνεις / μούνοις σοῖς ἑτάροισι καὶ οὐ θηήτορι κόσμῳ; (*how is it that you reveal your mind and your form / only to your companions and not for the world to see?*, 14.86–87). So Jesus is presented as "thinking the same", "agreeing" with the disciples, who are "comrades" (ἑτάροισι) rather than His "pupils" here

380 See further De Stefani (2002), pp. 104–105 (on *Par.* 1.1, ἀκίχητος), Nenci (2014), pp. 131–132, and Franchi (2016), p. 245.

(while John makes Judas simply refer to himself and the others with the pronoun ἡμῖν, 14.22). As is stated in several passages, there is ὁμοφροσύνη between Christ and disciples.[381] At *Par.* 17.37 Nonnus renders Christ's comparison of the relationship between the persons of the Trinity to the bond between the disciples (John 17.11) with the adjective ὁμόζυγες, a term that he also used elsewhere to describe the relationship between the persons of the Trinity.[382]

Nonnus refers emphatically to the absolute agreement and harmony between Christ's thoughts and those of the disciples. Such emphasis first appears in Book 6, where the Twelve are distinguished from the rest of Jesus' disciples:[383] John says that many disciples went away and stopped accompanying Jesus,[384] and a little later Nonnus mentions them, adding to the original the characterisation of these disciples with the phrase *ἀσταθέων ἑτερόφρονα* λαὸν ἑταίρων (6.210). Nonnus adds attributes to his narration that derive from ὁμοφροσύνη and ἑτεροφροσύνη, so repeatedly seizing the chance to insist that the narrow circle of the Twelve, for all their present defective knowledge and far from flawless conduct, stands clearly apart both from the opponents of Christ and from the wider group of Christ's followers, whose view of the Master is not clear and sound.[385] The poet thereby looks forward to the special, apostolic role of the Twelve and their ultimate adherence to the Master as we know it from Christian tradition.

F.5 *Gestures Accompanying the Direct Speech*

Sometimes direct speech in Nonnus is preceded by a gesture added to the narrative by the poet, which endows the scene with theatricality and increases the focus on the words (or silence) that follow. In the *Dionysiaca*, the frequent

381 *Par.* 13.141 ἀρθμὸν ὁμοφροσύνης ἀλύτῳ δήσαντες ὀχῆι, 15.47 ταῦτα φίλα φρονέων ἀγορεύω, 15.110 ἐμοὶ παρεόντες ὁμόφρονές ἐστε μαθηταί; in Book 17 the adjective refers to the agreement between the disciples: 17.34 ἡμετέρους σὺ φύλαξον ὁμόφρονας ἔκτοθεν ἄτης (Jesus' prayer to the Father for the disciples), repeated partly at 17.36.

382 See below, *H. Interpretatio, 2. Trinitarian Theology, a. Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity, iv. Par. 10.136–138: ἀγχιφανής, ἀμέριστος, ὁμόζυγος*. For the love in which discipleship is set as reflecting the love between Father and Son, see further Barrett (1978), p. 508 (on John 17.11), and Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), p. 103, on John 15.10, and p. 181.

383 For the distinction of the Twelve from the wider circle of Jesus' followers, see the discussion of Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3], pp. 207–209).

384 6.66 Πολλοὶ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ οὐκέτι μετ' αὐτοῦ περιεπάτουν (*many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him*), after these disciples heard about the necessity of eating and drinking Christ's flesh and blood in order to reach salvation. Drinking any blood was a taboo among Jews: see Blaine (2007), p. 40.

385 For the implications of the adjectives ἑτερόφρων, applied to the non-believers, too, see the discussion of Franchi (2013), p. 494.

gesticulation by persons is also a technique designed to attract the readers' attention and to lend the epic's rich and colourful episodes (even greater) vividness.[386] As is also the case in the *Dionysiaca*, in the *Paraphrase* the representation of impressive gestures is part of the wider context of the rhetorical principles of ἐνάργεια and ποικιλία.[387]

In Nonnus' rephrasing of Christ's dialogue with the Samaritan woman, while Jesus reveals to her that she is conversing with the Messiah (ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι, John 4.26), Jesus brings His finger to His nose (δάκτυλον αὐτοβόητον ἀναυδέι ῥινὶ πελάσας, *Par.* 4.130), in a gesture which underlines the significance of the phrase that comes next: Χριστὸς ὁ σοὶ λαλέων αὐτὸς πέλον, κτλ. (*Par.* 4.131). At the same time, anticipating the words that follow, the gesture acquires particular importance, since it marks divine epiphany and reveals, through the motif of the "eloquent silence", realised by the "speaking finger" (δάκτυλον αὐτοβόητον), that the person who is speaking to the woman is actually the Messiah.[388] Similarly, when urged by the disciples to receive some food, Jesus makes a negative gesture in Nonnus, before verbally refusing it: κινυμένης δέ / χειρὸς ἀφωνήτοιο νοήμονι μάρτυρι σιγῇ / δαῖτα μινυνθαδίην ἀπεσείσατο ταῦτα βοήσας (*Par.* 4.149–151). The verb ἀπεσείσατο stresses the emphatic refusal, absent from the Gospel, and thus underlines Christ's partial dissociation from the human condition, as this is made explicit in the words that follow: John 4.32 ἐγὼ βρῶσιν ἔχω φαγεῖν ἣν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε. The motif of the "eloquent silence" (μάρτυρι σιγῇ) recurs here, too, in a gesture that underlines "the testimony of the truth in the sacred moment of its revelation", as Caprara notes (on *Par.* 4.150, p. 252).[389]

At *Par.* 18.78, Nonnus depicts the young female servant of the high priest, the παιδίσκη θυρωρός of John 18.17, asking Peter whether he is one of Christ's disciples, as she casts an oblique glance at him: δμωὶς ἐπεσβόλος ὄμματι λοξῷ / δερκομένη πυλαωρὸς ἀνίαχε γείτονι Πέτρῳ / τοῖον ἔπος (*and the scurrilous slave woman, the doorkeeper, / looking at nearby Peter with eyes askance, cried aloud / such a word*, 18.78–80). As Livrea (1989, pp. 148–149) comments ad loc., the detail of the girl's careful glance at Peter (δερκομένη) is taken from the Synoptics, namely Mark 14.57 καὶ ἰδοῦσα τὸν Πέτρον θερμαινόμενον *ἐμβλέψασα* αὐτῷ λέγει, κτλ., and Luke 22.56 ἰδοῦσα δὲ αὐτὸν παιδίσκη τις καθήμενον πρὸς τὸ φῶς

386 See Miguélez Cavero (2009), pp. 251–252 and *passim*.

387 For the *Dionysiaca*, see Miguélez Cavero (2009), p. 266. For a discussion of these principles, see above, *1. Introduction, C. The Dionysiaca* and *F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

388 See Caprara (2005), pp. 237–238, on *Par.* 4.131, and Rotondo (2013), p. 106.

389 Caprara (2005). For the motif of "eloquent silence", see above, *E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 2. Announcement to the Sick Boy's Father of the Child's Cure*.

καὶ ἀτενίσασα αὐτῷ εἶπεν, κτλ. However, Nonnus invests the girl's glance with an epic colouring, since ὄμματι λοξῷ, which appears often in the *Dionysiaca*[390] but only here in the *Paraphrase*, is a variation on the Homeric ὑπόδρα ἰδών (*Il.* 1.148, 2.245, 4.111, *al.*) and modelled on Callimachus' ὄμματι ... λοξῷ in *AP* 7.525,5 f. and fr. 1.37–38. Ὑπόδρα ἰδών and its variations designate the hostile or reserved attitude of the onlooker towards the object of his gaze and here stresses that the girl belongs to the camp of the opponents of Jesus and the disciples. Such an addition contributes to the vividness of the scene and also to the sketching of the girl's character, thus lending a touch of *ethopoea* to the scene.[391]

At *Par.* 19.42–43, Jesus fixes His eyes on the ground and remains silent when addressed by Pilate with the question πόθεν ἐσσί; (*Par.* 19.42 ~ John 19.9 πόθεν εἶ σύ;), a detail added by Nonnus: κατωπιόων δ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ / κοίρανος ὄμματα πῆξε. Fixing the eyes on the ground may designate reflection, as in Hom. *Il.* 3.127, where Odysseus *στάσκεν, ὑπαὶ δὲ ἴδεσκε κατὰ χθονὸς ὄμματα πήξας*. Of course, Odysseus' gesture reveals deep thought before speaking.[392] Christ, on the contrary, remains silent. Looking at the ground may also be a sign of detachment, as is probably the case in Soph. *Ant.* 441, where Antigone is described by Creon as νεύουσαν ἐς πέδον κάρα. Jebb[393] comments ad loc.: "Antigone has her eyes bent on the ground; she is neither afraid nor sullen, but feels that Creon and she can never come to terms". The situation in the Nonnian passage is similar, *mutatis mutandis*, to that of Sophocles:[394] Christ and Pilate do not speak the same language, exactly as Creon and Antigone cannot communicate, as their beliefs and values are diametrically opposed to each other. The breach in communication between Christ and Pilate is comparable to the breach between Christ and the Jews in Book 10.[395] By graphically elaborating on Christ's silence to Pilate's question, the paraphrast suggests the difficulty involved in the revelation of such a crucial truth under the circumstances of this interrogation, carried

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390 15.238, 19.222, 25.278, 29.151, 45.64.

391 See below, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note.

392 Quintilian (*Inst. Or.* 11.3,157–158) suggests a short period of reflection before one starts speaking, recalling the Iliadic example of Odysseus' delay and motionlessness, before speaking. For fixing one's eyes on earth as a sign of "meditation", see Ricottilli (1992), pp. 190–192, 208, and for a discussion of Odysseus' gesture in regard to Quintilian's passage, pp. 205–206. For Peter's similar gesture, which is dictated by completely different feelings, see below, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 1. Peter*.

393 R.C. Jebb, *Sophocles: Antigone* (Cambridge 1902).

394 For the theatricality of the reference to gesture (with a discussion of νεύειν) in Procopius, as echoing tragic passages, see Matino (2006), p. 488.

395 See above, *3. Amplificatio in Dialogue*. The similarity between Pilate and the Jews as regards lack of understanding and rejection of the Saviour is observed by Meeks (1967, p. 67).

out by a man who is not in a position to receive Christ's divine message. That Pilate, as a pagan, cannot really listen to the Saviour's voice is actually mentioned by Cyril as an explanation for Jesus' silence in John 19.9. In John 18.36, Jesus had made clear to Pilate ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν (*my kingdom is not of this world*). Pilate was then told that those who belong to the truth *can* hear Jesus' voice: πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς (*everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice*, 18.37).[396] Cyril draws attention exactly to this statement of Christ, which refers to a voice unintelligible to the unbeliever Pilate, to justify Jesus' silence in 19.9.[397] At John 19.9, Pilate actually asks specifically for an explanation of the οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν in his first interrogation of Jesus, saying πόθεν εἶ σύ; Nonnus also adds the sentence "who are you"? (τίς τελέθεις; *Par.* 19.42) to Pilate's question, absent from John 19.9. Thus, the paraphrast implies that the Johannine Pilate's question, "Where are you from"? in fact concerns the real identity of Jesus, since to ask about the prisoner's origin is actually to ask about who the prisoner really is. To know where Christ comes from also means to know Christ's real identity. Pilate will not find out, although ἄνωθεν in Jesus' subsequent answer, about Pilate's (supposed) authority and its provenance (John 19.11), does indicate Jesus' real origin and identity, i.e. divinity.[398]

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396 For the distinction between "those who are from the truth" and those who are mastered by the devil, the father of lies (John 8.44) in the Gospel of John and in later authors, see Eichrodt (1970), pp. 177–178. For the similar idea of those who listen to the prophet's voice in *Deut.* 18.15, see Meeks (1967), p. 67. For the contrast between those who listen to the Saviour's voice and those who do not, see Schnackenburg (1982, [vol. 3]), p. 250. For Schnackenburg, "Pilate is challenged as to whether he would belong to this or the other group". Commenting on Pilate's attitude in John 18.33–38a, Meeks (1967, p. 67) remarks that the Roman "does not 'hear' Jesus' voice. Pilate does not belong to the 'flock' of the Good Shepherd, but to the sons of devil (or Cain) who seek to kill the messenger of God". In the same spirit, Cyril assured that Pilate's idolatry prevented him from belonging to the group of those who comprehend Christ's voice. See next note. For Pilate, see further below, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 4. Pontius Pilate.*

397 *Jo.* 3.70,16–25 Pusey ὁ δὲ φησὶν οὐκ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ λόγον, τῶν ἰδίων, κατά γε τὸ εἰκός, ἐπιμνησθεὶς ῥημάτων. Τί γὰρ ἔφη πρὸς αὐτόν; "Πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς". Εἰδωλολάτρης δὲ ὢν ὁ Πιλάτος, πῶς ἂν ἐπήκουσε τῆς τοῦ Σωτῆρος φωνῆς, ἀλήθειάν τε καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τέκνον ἑαυτὸν εἶναι φάσκοντος; Ἢ πῶς ἂν ὅλως τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ὄνομα παρεδέξατο καὶ τετίμηκεν, ὁ καὶ ἐν ἀρχαῖς αὐτὸ διαπτύσας καὶ εἰπὼν "τι ἐστιν ἀλήθεια", διὰ τὸ τοῖς ψευδωνύμοις ἔτι λατρεύειν θεοῖς καὶ τῷ τῆς ἀπάτης ἐγκεχῶσθαι σκότῳ; (*but Jesus, it says, did not answer him a word. He was probably reminding Pilate of his statement. What did he say to him? "Everyone who belongs to truth listens to my voice". Since Pilate was an idolater, how could he listen to the voice of the Saviour when he says that he is the truth and the child of the truth? How could he accept and honour the name of truth in any way, since he rejected it from the outset and said, "What is truth?" because he still worshipped false gods and was buried in the darkness of their deception?*).

398 Cf. Meeks (1967), pp. 72–73. Cyril interprets Jesus' words οὐκ ἔχεις ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ οὐδε-

To sum up, in his treatment of dialogues in direct and indirect speech, Nonnus tends to retain the original structure, showing respect for the model, which nevertheless he dramatically re-elaborates in stylistic and rhetorical terms. On some occasions the poet changes the structure of the *Vorlage* by introducing vivid elements of characterisation and even using the autonomous insertion of direct speech, as in the case of the servants' words to the father of the healed boy in *Par.* 4.239–241 and in Caiaphas' words to the Jews, concerning his view that Jesus must die, in 18.67–68. The use of direct speech in these cases highlights the importance of the message.

The otherwise common amplification of Johannine direct speech is exemplified here by an instance which, in addition to being a case of the usual Nonnian variation on the original by means of syntax and vocabulary, further lays weight on religious notions, namely the equality of honour between Father and Son and the novelty and openness of the kingdom of God to mankind, in Jesus' words (*Par.* 14.1–9). The amplification in dialogue also combines rhetorical devices with exegetical additions and elaborates on the dynamics of the Johannine persons' relations. Employing terms taken from the archaic Greek past and the Old Testament, the dialogue between Jesus and the Jews in *Par.* 10.111–121 illustrates the Jews' hostility towards the speaker and also their notable misunderstanding of Jesus' role and identity.

Nonnus' introductions to the exchanges between persons and the other comments that he, as narrator, adds between the persons' questions and answers, together with his additions to their very words, shed light on their thoughts, feelings and general disposition towards each other. Examples from Books 13 and 14 illustrate this technique, through the adjectives and phrases with which the poet sketches Peter, Thomas and Judas, son of Jacob. In these disciples' attitude, human, faulty and imperfect though it may be, the reader does see their deeper love for and devotion to Jesus and the importance of their future role. Lastly, Nonnus also enriches his scenes with descriptions of gestures and movements that underline the relationship between the actors. The poet takes special pains to depict the atmosphere when elaborating on Jesus' interaction with the humans around Him, whether they be friendly or aloof.

μίαν, εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν (*you would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above*, John 19.11) as referring to Jesus' divinity, because it means that the Son, being God, too, willingly accepted to suffer, with the Father's consent, since the will of the Father and the will of the Son are identical (Cyril, *Jo.* 3.72,12–20). See also Schnackenburg (1982, [vol. 3]), p. 261. Ridderbos' interpretation (1997, p. 603), according to which Jesus submits to the Father and keeps silent because "he must drink the cup that the Father has given him to drink", somewhat underplays the reference of this statement to Jesus' own divinity.

Examples of Jesus' gestures which Nonnus adds to his account of Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman, with the disciples (Book 4) and with Pilate (Book 18) demonstrate Nonnus' emphasis on the uniqueness and sacredness of Christ's identity, mission and message and the unbridgeable gap of understanding between Christ and the non-believer. The hostility of the non-believers' environment towards Christ's circle is also illustrated by the resentful way in which the young servant of the High Priest glances at Peter, in Book 18.

G Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea

When rephrasing the Johannine narration, Nonnus adds terms and whole phrases which elucidate features and nuances of the feelings, the mental quality and the disposition of the persons involved. The attributes and qualifications of the Johannine persons added by the poet are typically drawn from the Synoptics, from Cyril's commentary on John or from other patristic texts which include observations on these persons' character and reactions. By using such externally derived information, Nonnus both enriches his text with exegetical material, which sheds light on the motivation of Christ's human environment, and enhances the plain Johannine narration by making its characters more tangible and human. Nonnus' additions often create strong visual impressions, which contribute to the theatrical dimension of the narration, as we have seen in the previous section. With such character sketching, Nonnus blends his amplification of the Gospel with *ethopoea*.

Ethopoea, a technique widely discussed in ancient theory,[399] is defined as the imitation of an ἦθος through the speech which a concrete person, mythical

399 This practice is described in detail in the four Greek treatises of the Roman period on the *Progymnasmata*: Aelius Theon, Ps. Hermogenes, Aphthonius and Nicolaus Rhetor. In Theon (Patillon-Bolognesi 8, pp. 70–72), it is called personification (*prosopopoea*). Ps.-Hermogenes (*Prog*. 9.1 Patillon) makes a distinction between *ethopoea*, and *prosopopoea*: the first is an imitation of a person speaking (for instance, Hector talking to Andromache), and the latter is when we personify a thing, such as "Disproof". Ps. Hermogenes adds the category of *eidolopoea*, which are the words that may be attributed to a dead person. Similarly, Aphthonius (11.1 Patillon) uses the term *ethopoea* for the imitation of the character of a proposed speaker and distinguishes between *eidolopoea* (apparition-making), *prosopopoea* (personification) and *ethopoea*, (characterisation). See also Heath (2002/2003, p. 156). In Nicolaus (63–67 Felten) the distinction between *ethopoea* and *prosopopoea* is less clear; the author mentions the fact that there is a difference of opinion on this distinction, including the view that in *ethopoea* real (or mythological) persons are involved, whereas in *prosopopoea* the persons are invented. Commenting on Sopater, John of Sardis (*Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, 194–200 Rabe) mentions several kinds of

or not, might deliver on a specific occasion, so as to make his / her position more convincing, as ancient theorists explain.[400] The *ethopoea* realised in a text such as Nonnus' work examined here is restricted because of the limitations of the genre of the paraphrase which does not allow a fully free and imaginative development of a person's words and of the thoughts that these words reveal.[401] *Ethopoea* occurs in the *Paraphrase* not only when the poet introduces new speeches, but also when he elaborates those already drafted in the Gospel.[402] Ἠθοποιία and ἠθοποιεῖν can be used more freely and designate the character sketching which can be achieved even with few words, or even with a single word, if this is crucial and eloquent for the ethos for the sake of which it is employed. It is this that the author of the *Life of Sophocles* is thinking of, when he states that the tragedian could create an ethos even from half a line or from one word.[403]

In its broader sense, *ethopoea* can also actually include the description of a person's thoughts and feelings without any account of the person's words. It can consist of the presentation of character through the individual's appearance, facial expression and non-verbal reactions, as, for instance, movements

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ethopoeae and refers to previous authors of rhetorical treatises. For Libanius' *ethopoeae* and for further secondary literature on these "exercises in character", see, for instance, Gibson (2008), pp. 355–422, esp. pp. 355–357. For *posopopoeae* in rhetorical theory, see, for instance, Miguélez Cavero (2013b), pp. 364–365 with n. 59. See also the following notes.

400 Cf. Ps. Hermog. *Prog.* 9.1 Patillon ἠθοποιία ἐστὶ μίμησις ἤθους ὑποκειμένου προσώπου, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἀνδρομάχη ἐπὶ Ἕκτορι (*ethopoea is an imitation of the character of a person supposed to be speaking; for example, what words Andromache might say to Hector*), Aphth. 11.1 Patillon. Also, cf. Alex. Rh. 3.21,24–26 Spengel. See further Miguélez Cavero (2008), pp. 316–318. As for Biblical narrations, the *Codex Visionum* contains three such verse *ethopoeae*; see Miguélez Cavero (2008), p. 313. See further above, *1. Introduction, F. Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity*.

401 While the *Dionysiaca* offer many more opportunities for the development of the pattern τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους. For *Dion.* 2.113–162 as such a case, see Agosti (2005), pp. 43–44; see also pp. 47–50. For *ethopoea* in Greek Biblical poems (PBodmer 29, 35), see id. (2005), pp. 44–45. For a list of *ethopoeae* in late Greek poetry, including texts preserved on papyri and inscriptions and a selective list of Nonnian passages, with comparative comments, see id. (2005), pp. 55–60. See also E. Amato, G. Ventrella, "L'éthopée dans la pratique scolaire et littéraire", in Amato and Schamp (2005), pp. 213–231.

402 See above, *F. Handling of Speech (Direct / Indirect / Dialogue), 4. Introductory and Other "Comments" in Dialogic Speech Exchanges*, intr. note.

403 *Vita Soph.* 91–92. Moreover, Eustathius constantly speaks of Homer's artistry in ἠθοποιεῖν, referring to the poet's ability to find the proper words for each character, even for extremely minor or even imaginary ones, such as the boy whom Andromache imagines insulting her orphan Astyanax with the words "get lost", ἔρρ' οὕτως (*Il.* 22.498). Eustathius praises this expression, saying that "it is *ethopoea* indeed, because a young boy could not speak better": Eust. on *Il.* 22.498 (4.667).

and gestures showing joy, grief, anxiety or anger. When appreciating Xenophon's *ethopoea*, Apsines refers to the depiction of Pantheia, who is tearful and grieves for her husband who lies dead. In the passage from *Cyropaedia* to which Apsines refers, the ἦθος of Pantheia, wife of Abradates, is expressed through the description of her σχῆμα, her looks.[404] In a freer treatment of the term, Quintilian regards *ethopoea* as a μίμησις realised either through words or through deeds, a view which agrees with the Aristotelian concept of dramatic character whose ἦθος is expressed through actions.[405]

Given all this, the young female doorkeeper of the high priest who looks askance at Peter,[406] Peter who looks down or runs hastily to see the empty tomb in *Par.* 20, Mary of Magdala who weeps or runs quickly[407] all generate situations in which Nonnus employs this more general *ethopoea*. Even the poet's drawing attention to the very absence of words can be regarded as a type of *ethopoea*. This is a teasingly "missing" *ethopoea*, which, however, still contributes to the sketching of Peter's character, and is implied in Nonnus' insertion of a remark on words that Peter *did not utter*.[408] The visual power, in the sense of the creation of impressive mental images, is in any case inherent in *ethopoea* even in its classical form, which involves only words: as has been observed, the description of a person's ἦθος endows the narration with *enargeia*, vividness and dramatic quality.[409]

Rather than exhausting all the instances of the *Paraphrase* in which a person whose appearance is more or less significant in the Gospel speaks, we look in what follows at representative instances only of Nonnian character sketching in which the additions made by the poet contribute to the composition of a fuller portrait of the Johannine character and / or enhance the dramatic

404 Apsines 1.402,4–5 Spengel ἠθοποίησε τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γυναικός, ἱσταμένης ἐπὶ πένθει καὶ δακρυούσης ("he created the *ethopoea* of the appearance of the woman, as she was standing mourning and weeping"), with reference to Xen. *Cyr.* 7.3,8–9 ἐπεὶ δὲ εἶδε τὴν γυναῖκα χαμαὶ καθημένην καὶ τὸν νεκρὸν κείμενον, ἐδάκρυσέ [sc. Cyrus] τε ἐπὶ τῷ πάθει καὶ εἶπε [...] καὶ ἡ γυνὴ δὲ ἀνωδύρατο, κτλ. ("and when he saw the woman sitting down and the dead man lying on earth, tears came to his eyes because of the misfortune and he said [...] and the woman wailed", etc.)

405 Quint. *Inst. Or.* 9.2,58, Aristot. *Po.* 1449b36–1450a2. See further De Temmermann (2014), p. 37 with n. 256 and Small (2014), p. 143. For the influence of Cicero's *morum ac vitae imitatio* (*De Or.* 3.204,3) and *vitae naturarumque imitatio* (*Or.* 139,5) on Quintilian here, see Ventrella (2005), p. 205.

406 See above, *F. Handling of Speech* (*Direct / Indirect / Dialogue*), *5. Gestures accompanying the Direct Speech*.

407 See further below, *2. Mary of Magdala*.

408 See below, *1. Peter*.

409 See Schouler (2005), p. 91, Greco (2010), on *Or. fun. in Procopium* 11 (p. 153).

character of his / her movements and of the situation itself. We will look at the characters of four important figures in John, namely, Peter, Judas, Pontius Pilate and Mary Magdalene, who appears in two instances (Books 19 and 20) and, although her role is not extensive, she is still a memorable figure, who is involved in crucial episodes. For the sketching of these characters, Nonnus uses the different kinds of *ethopoea* as they are defined by ancient theory: the pathetic, the ethical and the mixed *ethopoea*.[410] An *ethopoea* is pathetic when it shows powerful feelings, ethical when it shows ethos, the character, and mixed when it shows both.[411] In the case of Mary Magdalene, her *ethopoea* is παθητική, as it shows her emotions. In the case of Judas it is ἠθική, since it shows his character. In the case of Peter and Pilate it is μικτή, since their words and Nonnus' general depiction of them reveal both thoughts and features of their character, their ἦθος (for instance, quickness of reaction, for Peter), and feelings (for instance, anxiety, for Peter, fear for Pilate).

410 For the categorisation of *ethopoeae* into pathetic, ethical and mixed, see further Ventrella (2005), pp. 181–190, Amato and Ventrella (2009), pp. 20–23, De Temmerman (2014), p. 36, Small (2014), p. 143, Verhelst (2017), p. 77 with n. 59. With regard to Libanius' eighteenth *ethopoea*, see Schouler (2005), pp. 90–91.

411 A pathetic *ethopoea* is seen by some ancient critics as an *ethopoea* which mainly relates to a situation involving feelings of distress, pain and lament: this suggestion is found in *Rhetorica Anonyma* where πάθος is grouped with ὀδύνη and ὀδυρμοί. Cf. Rhet. An. 594,3–7 Walz (C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3, Stuttgart, 1834). Yet for most, both ancient and modern, a pathetic *ethopoea* is not necessarily related to emotions resulting from some death or huge misfortune, in other words from a πάθος in the one sense of the word (LSJ I 2 b). Aphthonius seems to take πάθος to designate emotion in general (10.35,1–10 Rabe) τῶν δὲ ἠθοποιϊῶν αἱ μέν εἰσι παθητικαί, αἱ δὲ ἠθικαί, αἱ δὲ μικταί· καὶ παθητικαὶ μὲν αἱ κατὰ πάντα πάθος σημαίνουσαι, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἑκάβη κειμένης τῆς Τροίας. Ἠθικαὶ δὲ αἱ μόνον ἦθος εἰσφέρουσαι, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους ἠπειρώτης ἀνὴρ πρῶτος θεασάμενος θάλασσαν. Μικταὶ δὲ αἱ τὸ συναμφότερον ἔχουσαι, καὶ ἦθος καὶ πάθος, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἀχιλλεὺς ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ κειμένῳ βουλευόμενος πολεμεῖν· ἦθος μὲν γὰρ ἡ βουλή, πάθος δὲ φίλος πεσών (*some characterizations are pathetical, some ethical, some mixed. Pathetical are those showing emotion in everything; for example, what words Hecuba might say when Troy was destroyed. Ethical are those that only introduce character; for example, what words a man from inland might say on first seeing the sea. Mixed are those having both character and pathos; for example, what words Achilles might say over the body of Patroclus when planning to continue war; for the plan shows character, the fallen friend pathos*) and his Byzantine commentator, John of Sardis, definitely does not equate πάθος with a hurtful feeling, since he includes anger, sorrow, but also compassion and eros in the πάθη of the soul which can be expressed by what Aphthonius defines as pathetic *ethopoea*: *Comm. in Aphth. Prog.* 206.25–207.3 Rabe. John's interpretation echoes the standard view, systematised by Aristotle, who includes both positive and negative feelings in the πάθη of the soul, speaking of anger, pity, fear, love and other feelings (*Rhet.* 1378a19–22). It is worth noting here that the *ethopoeae* of Libanius, belonging to his *Progymnasmata*, are of a mixed type, displaying both "character" and emotion (see Gibson 2014, p. 136).

Of the four Johannine persons discussed here, Mary Magdalene and Judas are simple characters, in terms of the classification proposed by modern theorists, as they do not undergo any change. Peter and Pilate are "round" or "complex",[412] since they have "more than one trait and are subject to change". Compared to Mary, who is always a firm and loving supporter of Jesus,[413] Judas is a little less simple, because, even if his negative features are present from the beginning and they do not change, his behaviour is actually instigated by the devil, when he goes away to betray his Master, his evil having reached a peak.[414] Peter is characterised by fervor and devotion to Christ's teaching but is also fearful for his own life and famously denies his Master, in other words actually contradicts and goes against his previous self. In the end he finds his original zeal and love for Christ again, his faith strengthened and he himself having literally become a "rock". Pilate is neither "good" nor "bad" and does not really change, as his reluctance to kill Christ never ceases. However, in literary terms, he is complex, like Peter, because two contradictory powers, that is, his desire to release Christ and his submission to outside pressures, struggle with each other in him and because he displays other antitheses. His arrogance is moderated by its opposite, fear, and his behaviour during Jesus' trial combines seriousness and irony. All the characters' features are fundamentally present in John, but Nonnus adds further details to their words, gestures and movements which clarify their thoughts and motivation in each episode.

G.1 *Peter*

Peter, son of John (John 1.42) and brother of Andrew (John 1.41, 6.8) was a fisherman either from Bethsaida (John 1.44) or from Capernaum (Mark 1.21 and 29).[415] In John's Gospel he is presented as the leader, in a sense, of the Twelve,

412 Forster's distinction between "flat" and "round" characters is somewhat simplistic, as Small observes, and has been improved by suggestions of typologies which include the pairs simple-complex and static-dynamic. See further Small (2014), pp. 53–57. For the complexity of Peter's character in John, see Culpepper (1983), pp. 120–121. For Culpepper (1983, pp. 142–143), Pilate in John "is a study in the impossibility of compromise, the inevitability of decision, and the consequences of each alternative".

413 From a different point of view, Culpepper emphasises Mary's persistent adherence to the human aspect of Jesus and her lack of comprehension, which ends only after the risen Christ's explicit words to her and the reference to His ascension to the Father. In this way, Culpepper argues, the reader of John's Gospel is led to fully grasp the meaning of Jesus' "glorification". See Culpepper (1983), p. 144.

414 Culpepper (1983, pp. 124–125) interprets Judas in John's Gospel as "the representative defector", stressing his dependence on the devil.

415 For an overview of the slender evidence on Peter's social background and family, see

i.e., of the intimate circle of the disciples, since he is quick to react to Christ's words and to the events and he often acts as the disciples' spokesman. Although he has his moments of weakness, which namely consist in his triple denial of Jesus (John 18.17–18 and 25–27), he is second as regards love and loyalty to Jesus only to the "Other", or "Beloved Disciple" (cf. John 19.26 and 20.8),[416] who is traditionally identified with John the Apostle,[417] and his devotion to the Master is repeatedly expressed. As we have seen, in the dialogue between Peter and Christ in *Par.* 13.145–169, Nonnus composes a sensitive portrayal of Peter, elaborating on the features which are concisely presented in the Gospel: love for Christ and consequent concern and anxiety about what will to happen to Christ, spontaneity, curiosity and love of learning.[418]

In his account of the renaming of Peter in the first chapter of the Gospel, Nonnus expands the Johannine *σὺ κληθήσῃ* Κηφᾶς, ὃ ἑρμηνεύεται Πέτρος (1.43), adding the explanation that the new name symbolises the concrete faith of this disciple: ἐπωνυμίην δὲ *καλύψει* / *πρεσβυτέρην* Σίμωνος ὑπέρτερον οὔνομα Πέτρου, / πίστιος ἀρραγέος σημήιον (*the older given name of / Simon shall be covered by the superior name of Peter, / a sign of unbreakable faith*, *Par.* 1.165–167). Nonnus' explanation is in accordance with the comment on Peter's name, which refers to the firmness of his faith. The explanation also appears, for instance, in John Chrysostom (*In paral. dem.* PG 51.51,50 ff. *In Illud* PG 51.375,28 f.) and in Didymus the Blind (*Comm. In Eccl.* [*11–12*], 355,25 f.). Others, like Cyril in his commentary on John's passage, stress the other aspect of the interpretation of the Peter's name, i.e., that Peter will be the "stone" on which Christ's Church will be built.[419]

Ehrman (2006), pp. 24–27 (an account, however, not free from a subjective view of the standing of the people and communities discussed).

416 See Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), p. 75. For Peter's "confession" to Jesus, in which he acts as the spokesman of the Twelve, in John 6.67, see further Blaine (2007), pp. 42–43. The reading of Droge is far-fetched (1990): after emphasising the Johannine instances in which Peter's behaviour reveals a faulty understanding of Jesus' teaching, Droge claims that these instances cast doubt on Peter's firm position within the circle of the Twelve. Schaff (1931, pp. 187–189) expresses this inconsistency in Peter's behaviour in terms of a distinction between a "carnal" (weak and doubtful) and a "spiritual" (faithful, devoted follower of Christ as far as martyrdom) Peter.

417 See below, *H. Interpretatio, 1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, a. The Virginity of Mary and John the Apostle. Mary Θεοτόκος.*

418 See above, *F. Handling of Speech (Direct / Indirect / Dialogue), 4. Introductory and Other "Comments" in Dialogic Speech Exchanges.*

419 Commenting on the change of Peter's name, Cyril says (*Jo.* 1.196,10 f. Pusey) φερωνύμως δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς πέτρας μετονομάζει Πέτρον· ἐπ' αὐτῷ γὰρ ἔμελλε τὴν αὐτοῦ θεμελιοῦν Ἐκκλησίαν (*he changes his name to Peter, naming him after petra, because he was about to found his church*

Peter's personality is elsewhere highlighted by Nonnus with nuances which do not occur in the *Vorlage*. In *Par.* 4.134 Nonnus presents the disciples' (lack of) reaction to or comment on the dialogue between Christ and the Samaritan woman (John 4.27 οὐδεὶς μέντοι εἶπεν, κτλ.), adding the detail οὐδέ μιν εἴρετο Πέτρος, ἅτε θρασύς. Θρασύς, an adjective which Nonnus uses sometimes in its positive sense, as "courageous", and sometimes in its negative sense, as "audacious",[420] is attributed to Peter also in *Par.* 18.51, when he cuts off the ear of the servant during the arrest of Jesus, and twice in Book 21. In *Par.* 21.102, Nonnus labels Peter with the adjective in the context of Peter's reaction to Christ's repeated question to him φιλεῖς με; (John 21.17).[421] In *Par.* 4.134 the poet adds to the Johannine narration the remark that "not even Peter, bold though he was, asked". Nonnus treats John 21.12 identically: οὐδεὶς δὲ ἐτόλμα τῶν μαθητῶν ἐξετάσαι αὐτόν· σὺ τίς εἶ; εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κύριός ἐστιν (*now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord*). To John's depiction of the unwillingness of the part of all the disciples to ask who the stranger was, Nonnus adds the statement that not even Peter dared to ask, although *he* knew, in fact transferring the Johannine report that the disciples "knew" to Peter alone: καὶ οὐ θρασὺς εἴρετο Σίμων / ἐγγύθι γινώσκων, ὅτι κοίρανος ἦεν Ἰησοῦς (*Par.* 21.71–72). In adding that not even Peter asked any questions and in giving the adjective θρασύς to him in both passages, Nonnus has in mind his general behaviour, as described in the Gospels, and is also stressing his eminence among the disciples. Peter is typically more active, curious and daring than the others,[422] so that he *could* have commented upon Christ's attitude, as he does elsewhere. So, in *Par.* 4.134 and 21.71–72 we have a variation, as it were, of *ethopoea*, or rather

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on him), repeating Jesus' words in Mat. 16.18 κἀγὼ δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πύλαι ᾅδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς (*and I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*). The same explanation is followed by John Chrysostom in his commentary of the Johannine passage in question (PG 59.122,14 ff.). The *Catena in Marcum* combines the two interpretations: 297,12 ff. Cramer (J.A. Cramer, *Catenae Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, vol. 1, Oxford 1840, repr. Hildesheim 1967) Πέτρος (sic) γὰρ αὐτὸν κέκληκεν, ἐπειδὴ ἐν πέτρᾳ ἤμελλεν οἰκοδομεῖν, ἐπειδὴ ἀρραγὴς ἦν (sic) ὁ λόγος καὶ ἡ πίστις ἀσάλευτος (obviously the correct readings are Πέτρον and ἦν respectively). See also De Stefani (2002), pp. 213–214.

420 See Preller (1918), pp. 145–146. Nonnus uses it for Judas, *inter alios*, in its negative sense. See below, *Judas*.

421 Καὶ θρασὺς ἄχνυτο Πέτρος, rendering John's ἐλυπήθη ὁ Πέτρος (21.17).

422 Cf., for instance, his initial refusal to let Jesus wash his feet (John 13.6–8) and his attack on the high priest's servant (John 18.10), for which see the discussion by Blaine (2007, pp. 63–69 and 85–90 respectively). An early remark on the meaningfulness of Nonnus' adjectives is by Wifstrand (1933), pp. 81–82.

a play on its principle.[423] Since Peter *could* have said something which would have been presented by Nonnus in accordance with Peter's character, but did not (because Nonnus never adds to a person's "lines" a speech wholly made up), we have a "missing" *ethopoea* which paradoxically actually contributes to the character's general *ethopoea*.

Peter's curiosity and quickness of thought is also depicted through the adjective αἰολόμητις in *Par.* 21.120, in the context of the account of how, after Jesus' prediction to Peter of his death by crucifixion, Peter turned around and saw the Beloved Disciple following and asked the Master about this disciple's future: John 21.20–21 ἐπιστραφεὶς ὁ Πέτρος βλέπει τὸν μαθητὴν ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀκολουθοῦντα (…) λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ (*Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them* […] *he said to Jesus*), rendered as καὶ τότε βαίνων / ἐντροπαλιζομένης ἐτιταίνετο κύκλον ὀπωπῆς / Σίμων αἰολόμητις (…) ἀνείρετο (*and as he was marching then, / he stretched forth the circle of his eye that often turned around, / Simon of cunning mind* […] *asked*, *Par.* 21.118–120 and 126). Peter's movement (ἐπιστραφείς) is amplified by a whole phrase which emphasises the turning of his head which is presented as a "stretching" (ἐτιταίνετο). The adjectives αἰολόμητις, attributed to Prometheus in Hesiod (*Th.* 511) and unique in the *Paraphrase*, designates Peter's sharpness of mind. He was quick to suspect, probably the first among the disciples to do so, that the Beloved Disciple's fate would be special.[424] His usual and characteristic inquisitiveness here is again commented upon by Cyril, who however, disapproves of it this time, regarding it as curiosity in its negative sense (περιέργεια, involvement in other people's affairs), rather than as love of learning (χρηστομάθεια) as elsewhere.[425]

Cyril attributes εὐτολμία to Peter, when he comments on the fact that Peter accompanies Christ to the house of Caiaphas[426] and on the disciples' reaction to the appearance of the resurrected Christ to them.[427] John Chrysostom further speaks of Peter's παῤῥησίαν (homily 88 on John, PG 59.480,12) and, elsewhere (*In Mat.* PG 58.536,20 f.), he uses the adjective θερμός of Peter: πάλιν ὁ

423 Cf. above, intr. note to *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea.*

424 Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3], p. 368) observed that Peter's question in John shows that the disciples felt that there is something special about the Beloved Disciple, especially since John connects his narration here with the episode in the Last Supper, in which the Beloved Disciple threw himself in Jesus' lap (John 21.20 ὃς καὶ ἀνέπεσεν ἐν τῷ δείπνῳ ἐπὶ τὸ στῆθος αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν, Κύριε, τίς ἐστιν ὁ παραδιδούς σε; *the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?"*).

425 *Jo.* 3.168,16–22 Pusey.

426 *Jo.* 3.29,22–25 Pusey.

427 *Jo.* 3.161,17–19 Pusey.

Πέτρος θερμὸς ὢν μόνος τολμᾷ περὶ τούτων διαλεχθῆναι (commenting on Mat. 16.22, where Peter reacts to Jesus' foretelling his death and Resurrection).[428] Peter's readiness to react and his quickness to respond to Christ's call is also emphasised by means of Nonnus' additions to the account of the resurrected Christ's visit to the disciples, who are out fishing in Book 21. Nonnus renders John 21.7, where Peter is the first among the disciples to go out to the shore to find Jesus and jumps into the sea, ἥλατο εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, with the phrase καὶ ταχὺς εἰς ῥόον ἆλτο (*and swift he jumped into the current*, *Par.* 21.44) followed by a graphic description of Peter's swimming, absent from the Johannine narrative. The other disciples follow by boat. Nonnus imagines Peter as being in a hurry, as the Gospel suggests through the idea of his jump into the sea, and adds the adjective ταχύς to describe his movement. Peter's anxiety and speed are underlined also by Cyril in his commentary on the passage.[429]

After his first denial of Christ in his response to the girl doorkeeper, Peter is sitting by the fire together with the servants. Nonnus describes his face as ἄγνωστος: ἄψοφος ἵστατο Πέτρος ἔχων ἄγνωστον ὀπωπήν (*Par.* 18.90, where the Gospel has simply ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Πέτρος μετ' αὐτῶν ἑστὼς καὶ θερμαινόμενος: *Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself*, John 18.18). Peter is silent (ἄψοφος) and unknown (ἄγνωστος). Rotondo notes that Peter experiences a crisis of conscience and is overwhelmed by emotions such as fear, insecurity and confusion and holds that ἄγνωστος points to Peter's effort to go unobserved.[430] While ἄγνωστος means, of course, "unknown", and Peter's face is indeed unknown to the servants,[431] Nonnus is perhaps also implying that Peter's *look*[432] is hard to define and intentionally inexpressive. Cyril's comment on the passage justifies such an interpretation: Cyril says that Peter was in the company of the servants, pretending that he was doing what they were doing, so that he might not be betrayed by the sad expression of his face.[433]

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428 Cf. also John Chrys. homily 33 (on John 4.21–28), PG 59.192,3–4 καίτοι γε ὁ Πέτρος θερμότερον πολλαχοῦ καὶ κινεῖται καὶ φθέγγεται (*yet Peter in every instance was more deeply moved and spoke more ardently than John*).

429 3.161,16–19 Pusey.

430 Rotondo (2012), p. 449.

431 Hadjittofi translates *Peter stood silent, his face unfamiliar to them.* The old editions (for instance, Bordatus 1561, p. 165, Nansius 1589, p. 245, Sylburg 1596, p. 218, Abram 1623, p. 200) have *habens incognitam faciem.* Marcellus (1861, p. 255) translates "inconnu", Livrea (1989, p. 95) "con il suo volto sconosciuto", Sherry (1991, p. 262) "possessing an unfamiliar face", Prost (2003, p. 194) "still unrecognized by them".

432 Ὀπωπή can designate the face, the eyes, or the look. See Livrea (1989), p. 153, on *Par.* 18.90 and D'Ippolito (2016, pp. 394–395), who also points out that Nonnus is fond of the formula ἔχων + adjective consisting of the privative ἀ- + ὀπωπήν.

433 *Jo.* 3.32,4–7 Pusey.

Nonnus adds to the narrative the depiction of Peter looking down when Mary of Magdala finds him and reports that Christ has disappeared from the grave: κατωπιόωντι δὲ Πέτρῳ (*Par.* 20.13, where the Gospel says καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον, John 20.2). Accorinti (1996) observes ad loc. that, reading between the lines of the Johannine text, Nonnus adds a psychological touch to Peter's portrait: Peter's looking down might be interpreted as a sign of shame after his triple denial of Christ (John 18.17 and 25–27). Notably, the Johannine account is the only one in which Peter does not shed tears when the rooster crows and he realises that he has just denied the Master, as Jesus has foretold (John 13.38). In all the other corresponding Gospel passages (Mark 14.72, Mat. 26.75, Luke 22.62), Peter weeps ("bitterly" in Matthew and Luke) for this. Since John omits Peter's tears, in other words his regret and repentance,[434] Nonnus probably inserts this idea later by depicting Peter looking down at *Par.* 20.13. Apart from remorse, Peter's look may also reveal sorrow for Jesus' death.[435] Cyril remarks that Peter tries not to look κατηφής and betray his anxiety for Jesus's fate while sitting with the servants in the high priest's house in Book 18, in one of the scenes discussed above. It may be suggested that Nonnus drew inspiration from this passage for Peter's gesture in *Par.* 20.13, taking from it the idea of κατηφέω, which means "to lower the eyes".[436]

In the continuation of the scene of Book 20, Peter's feelings are depicted through the idea of οἶστρος which Nonnus adds to the narrative. When Peter hears the news about the empty tomb, he rushes to the monument. With ἔμπνοος οἰστρηθέντι ποδῶν διφήτορι ταρσῷ / ἄνθορεν ἐκ μεγάροιο (*Par.* 20.16–17), Nonnus renders the Johannine ἐξῆλθεν (20.3), taking the idea of haste from the next Johannine verse (20.4 ἔτρεχον καὶ οἱ δύο ὁμοῦ). The participle οἰστρηθέντι recalls the uses of the verb in the context of descriptions of the urge which pagan divinities, namely Dionysus in the *Dionysiaca*, exercise on humans,[437] and thus magnifies the intensity of the effect that Christ's action

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434 For Blaine (2007, pp. 100–101), Peter does not demonstrate remorse in John, because Peter's future loyalty has already been established by the John through Jesus' own words at the end of Book 13.

435 For fixing one's eyes on earth as an indication of grief, see further Ricottilli (1992), pp. 209–210, with numerous examples from literature (for instance, Eur. *Or.* 957–958, *Med.* 1012, *IA* 1122–1123, etc.).

436 For κατωπιάω as a synonym of κατηφέω and κατηφιάω, see Accorinti (1996), pp. 130–131, on *Par.* 20.13. For κατηφέω as designating lowering one's eyes, see further Ricottilli (1992), p. 209, n. 68. For the similar, albeit differently motivated, gesture of Jesus in *Par.* 19.42 ff. (Jesus remaining silent after Pilate's question "where are you from?"), see above, *F. Handling of Speech* (*Direct* / *Indirect* / *Dialogue*), *5. Gestures accompanying the Direct Speech.*

437 See Accorinti (1996), pp. 134–135.

has on Peter and Peter's love for the Master. Similar conclusions can be drawn for the description of Mary Magdalene, who runs towards the disciples, having seen the resurrected Christ, with the verb πεπότητο (see below, *Mary of Magdala*).

Peter's characterisation is realised through various means. Besides Nonnus' choice of adjectives used to describe him and as far as *ethopoea per se* is concerned, his thoughts and feelings are depicted less through the words he utters and more in the wider sense of *ethopoea*: accounts of facial expression and gestures (according to Apsines' statement), movements and even the absence of words. Nonnus' *ethopoea* is mixed, in that it reveals features of character and emotions,[438] thereby actually magnifying John's already mixed *ethopoea* of Peter. Since it involves both positive and negative traits, Nonnus' ἠθοποιεῖν of Peter becomes even more interesting.

G.2 *Mary of Magdala*

Mary Magdalene was from Galilee, as we know from Matthew (27.55–56), who includes her in the women who "served" Jesus.[439] In John, she is first mentioned in 19.25, where she stands near the Cross, together with Jesus' mother and (probably) one more woman.[440] Then, "on the first day of the week",[441] she visits the tomb in which Christ was placed and finds it empty (John 20.1), she announces the news to the disciples, returns with Peter and the "Beloved Disciple" and after they leave she meets the resurrected Christ (John 20.11–17). Her

438 See above, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note.

439 Magdala was located on the west shore of Gennesaret. See Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 276–277, and cf. the discussion of Ehrman (2006), pp. 197–198. In Luke (8.2) she is among Jesus' female followers, having been freed from seven evil spirits by Jesus.

440 John (19.25) says: εἱστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπᾶ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνή (*but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene*). The exact number of the women who stood near the Cross is a matter of dispute. Modern scholars tend to prefer four. See Barrett (1978), p. 551, Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 276–277, Ridderbos (1997), p. 611 with n. 141. However, Nonnus (19.135–137) clearly understands the number of the women as three (Mary [Jesus' mother], Mary [daughter or wife of Clopas] and Mary Magdalene), identifying ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ with Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπᾶ in John. See also Franchi (2012b), p. 153. Three is also the number that ancient commanators understand (John Chrysostom and Cyril do not comment on this): cf. *Cat. In Mat.* 256,4–5, Eus. *Qu. Ev. Ad Mar.* PG 22.945,25 (Eusebius further clarifies that John speaks of three women, while the other Evangelists speak of four).

441 Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων. On the interpretation of the phrase (probably meaning early on Sunday morning), see Barrett (1978) on John 20.1 (p. 562).

apostolic role is suggested by her conveying of the news to the Apostles and by the fact that she is the first witness of the Resurrection.[442]

During the Crucifixion and during both her visits to Christ's tomb, Nonnus presents her as being in tears or as being "a lover of tears". She is described as φιλοδάκρυος at *Par.* 19.137, where she stands near the Cross, whereas John says nothing about tears (19.25), and she is also described in such terms in *Par.* 20.2, during her first visit to the tomb of Christ, while John is again silent about any sentimental reaction of her part (20.1). Mary is presented through an *abundantia verborum* elaborating on the fact that she sheds tears, θερμὸν ἀναβλύζουσα γοήμονος ὄμβρον ὀπωπῆς, / μυρομένη ζώοντα in *Par.* 20.49 f. In this passage she laments for Christ during her second visit to the tomb, and the information is actually offered by John, who presents her as κλαίουσα (20.11). So, Nonnus states or implies (with the adjective φιλοδάκρυος) that Mary is crying during and because of the Master's suffering, and thus emphasises Mary's deep love for Christ and the extent of her subsequent grief during and after the Crucifixion.

As for her tears during the Crucifixion (*Par.* 19.137), it seems that Nonnus is influenced by Cyril who infers, when he comments on John 19.25, that the women, including the mother of Christ, are crying (Nonnus, however, does not mention tears in connection to the mother of Christ). Cyril draws this conclusion, as he visualises a situation not described in John (nor in any other Gospel), on psychological grounds, and employs the argument that women are anyway inclined to weeping, especially when there is every reason to do so. Cyril uses, furthermore, the term φιλόδακρυς, an adjective echoed in Nonnus in a rare form (φιλοδάκρυος: second declension), according to the variation of the forms πολύδακρυς-πολυδάκρυος.[443] Nonnus also uses φιλοδάκρυος of Mary, the sister of Lazarus in the *Paraphrase* (11.103). In its unique appearance in the *Dionysiaca*, φιλόδακρυς qualifies Agave, mourning for the loss of Pentheus (46.315). The addition of tears to the portrayal of Mary Magdalene during her first visit to the tomb is a further psychological touch that Nonnus applies to his picture of Mary, inspired by the tears which the Evangelist mentions in connection with Mary's second visit. Moreover, the Nonnian description of Mary as φιλοδάκρυος in the Johannine instances where tears are not mentioned perhaps owes something to the commentaries of Cyril and John Chrysostom.

442 See, for instance, and as regards iconography, Apostolos-Cappadona (2005), p. 141 and *passim*.

443 3.89,30–3.90,1–3 Pusey. The generalisation that women are prone to weeping is found as early as in Sophocles and Euripides (*Aj.* 579–580, *Med.* 928), but here Nonnus seems to be specifically reminiscent of Cyril, who uses this commonplace precisely with regard to the women standing near the Cross and also employs the adjective φιλόδακρυς.

Cyril, in his comment on the scene describing the appearance of the resurrected Christ to Mary, says that her heart is inclined towards sorrow[444] and that she was "warmer" than the other women in her love for Christ.[445] In a comment similar to that made by Cyril about the women weeping near the Cross just discussed, Chrysostom says that "women are passionate and more inclined to pity than men", thereby underlining the difference between Mary and Peter, only one of whom is crying when they both visit the tomb. Chrysostom emphasises the intensity of Mary's tears, which, as if he were a paraphrast himself, Chrysostom describes as a "bitter lament", when the Gospel uses simply the participle κλαίουσα.[446] Thus Nonnus adds to his narration a detail based on another Johannine passage and which is also drawn from patristic literature. At the same time, this feature, which employs a term used by Nonnus in both his pagan epic and his Christian poem to describe a woman's sorrow for a dead beloved person,[447] is closer to everyday life and more affecting than the minimalistic Gospel account.

The workings of the depiction of Mary at *Par.* 20.79 are similar. Mary's love is also emphasised by Nonnus, when he describes her as "flying", as she goes to the disciples to tell them the news after her encounter with the risen Christ.[448] The poet replaces the neutral Johannine ἔρχεται Μαρία (20.18) with the impressively metaphorical καὶ Μαρίη πεπότητο (20.79). Apart from the common formula "winged words", the most common figurative use of the verb "to fly" in earlier poetry, starting from Aristophanes (*Nu.* 319, *Av.* 1445), refers to intense sentiments or impulses of the soul and mind (ψυχή, νόος).[449] In the *Dionysiaca* Nonnus usually employs the form πεπότητο literally, to designate the movement

444 Χαρίζεται τοίνυν τῇ Μαριὰμ πρὸς τὸ μηκέτι κλαίειν μηδὲ εἰς λύπας εὔκολον τὴν καρδίαν ἔχειν ὁ Κύριος (*so the Lord grants to Mary not only that she stop ctrying and no longer have a heart that is easily disposed to sorrow*, 3.121,9–10 Pusey).

445 Θερμότερον ἐχούσης τὸ κίνημα πρὸς ἀγάπην τὴν εἰς Χριστόν, *because she had the most intense impulse of love for Christ* (3.121,32 f. Pusey).

446 John Chrys. homily 86 (on John 20.10–23), PG 59.467,33–36 περιπαθές πως τὸ γυναικεῖον γένος, καὶ πρὸς οἶκτον ἐπιῤῥεπέστερον. Τοῦτο δὲ εἶπον, ἵνα μὴ θαυμάσῃς τί δήποτε Μαρία μὲν πικρῶς ἐθρήνει τῷ τάφῳ, Πέτρος δὲ οὐδὲν τοιοῦτον ἔπαθεν (*how tender-hearted and inclined to sympathy is womankind! I am mentioning this that you may not wonder why in the world it was that, while Mary was weeping bitterly at the tomb, Peter displayed no such emotion*). The commentator is careful to make it clear that it is in the nature of women to be tearful, so that Peter might not be accused of lack of sensitivity.

447 Cf. Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 236, on 11.103b.

448 For the apostolic role which some critics have attributed to Mary because of Jesus' appearance to her and her subsequent mission to the disciples, see Ernst (2009), pp. 7–8.

449 In a metaphorical sense, referring to objects, the verb ποτέομαι is used of missiles (arrows, spears: *Il.* 5.99, 289, *al.*), snow (Soph. *OC* 1460), the thunderbolt (Aristoph. *Av.* 576).

of deities or heroes who are swift *par excellence*.[450] Metaphorically, the verb describes the speed of mortals twice in the *Dionysiaca*, at 39.406 (Deriades)[451] and at 45.31 (a Bacchant).[452] Both Deriades and the Bacchant are in a peculiar state of mind, Deriades being preoccupied with Dionysus' pursuit of him and the Bacchant being in the accustomed Bacchic frenzy, which justifies the use of πεπότητο to describe their movement. The effect that the encounter with Dionysus can produce in mortals[453] is the same as the encounter with Christ, in the supernatural circumstances of the Resurrection, produces in Mary. The intense sentiments aroused in all of them results in a swift movement, which is, figuratively speaking, beyond human abilities. Mary's reaction on seeing the risen Christ is equivalent to Peter's haste to visit the tomb, which he hears is empty in *Par*. 20.17–18.[454]

Nonnus' sketching of Mary's character through her reactions to Christ's suffering, death and Resurrection creates *ethopoea* through visual representation rather than through words. This magnifies the dramatic effect of the description of the moment (the Crucifixion, the visit to the tomb), while generating powerful images, thus enhancing vividness and theatricality of the narrative.[455] The appearance of Mary, described as weeping or running fast, and that of Peter, when Nonnus depicts him looking down in shame or running in great haste, reveal emotions. Mary's *ethopoea* is purely παθητική (while Peter's is mixed, as we have seen), in a similar manner to the *ethopoea* created by means of the description of someone's σχῆμα in Apsines' example, which also involves no speeches and is also actually pathetic, even if it is not described as such by the author.[456] An *ethopoea* realised through an account of appearance rather than speech can only be pathetic, because ethical *ethopoea* would necessarily require words. Sentiments *can* be conveyed by means of a description of one's appearance alone without utterance. By contrast, character traits, being

450 Hermes (2.219, 9.18), Hera (23.118), Perseus (25.33), Megaira (31.98), Iris (31.124 and 197), Eros (33.183), Nemesis (48.470), a dream (29.362, 34.99), Eris in the form of Rhea visiting Dionysus in a dream (20.99). Divine movement rendered with ἵπτατο: Hera (31.199), Eros (33.185), Nemesis (48.384). Frequently the movement of Φήμη is described with the verb (for instance, 5.370, 18.1, 24.179, 26.275, 44.123). Also Perseus (47.656 and 659).

451 The phrase ἐς πεδίον πεπότητο θοώτερα γούνατα πάλλων, shows that Deriades is anxious to escape Dionysus.

452 The dance of a Bacchant is rendered with the phrase πεπότητο νέη σκαίρουσα Μιμαλλών.

453 Positively, in the case of the Bacchant, who is a friend of the god, negatively in the case of Deriades, who is one of the god's enemies.

454 See above, *Peter*.

455 For this feature, expressed through the description of the intense movement of exited males and females in the *Paraphrase*, see Rotondo (2013), pp. 98–100.

456 See above, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea*, intr. note.

permanent features, require words and can be hardly rendered through expression and motion, which are changeable.

G.3 *Judas*

Judas, whose father's name is reported as Simon only in John (6.71), is called "Iscariot", a name of disputed origin and meaning; it has been suggested that the term refers to Judas' town or, alternatively, to his father.[457] He belongs to the Twelve and his betrayal of Christ is recounted in all Gospels. In Luke 22.3 and in John 13.2, the devil enters Judas (Luke) / puts into his heart the idea of betraying Jesus (John).[458] Nonnus' depiction of Judas[459] is strikingly more negative than that in the Gospel of John.[460] The poet is especially keen to emphasise Judas' greed, which is not mentioned by John and is only briefly implied in Matthew.[461] In portraying the traitor, Nonnus establishes a network of narrative and theological associations accomplished through the careful choice of vocabulary.

Judas first appears in *Par.* 6.200–201, where Nonnus employs the metaphor of the οἶστρος, the "gadfly of silver illness", to convey the idea of the greed compelling Judas to betray the Lord:

> καὶ τίς ἀνὴρ μιν ἔμελλεν Ἰουδαίοις παραδώσειν
> ἀργυρέης νούσοιο νόον δεδονημένος οἴστρῳ
>
> and which man was going to surrender Him to the Jews, / shaken in his mind by the sting of the disease of silver coins

In the corresponding Johannine passage it is simply stated that one of the disciples will betray Christ. The idea of greed is nowhere mentioned (John 6.64 καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ παραδώσων αὐτόν). The metaphor of the gadfly and the participle δεδονημένος indicate that in the Nonnian rendering there is an echo of Cyril's comment on John 13.30, where, obeying devil, Judas departs in the night

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457 See further Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), p. 28, Franchi (2013), p. 507.

458 See also Schnackenburg (1968 [vol. 1]), p. 31.

459 For a survey on his characteristics and his role at the Last Supper in particular, see Greco (2004), pp. 23–25 and pp. 143–156.

460 See Livrea (2000), pp. 269 ff.

461 Mat. 26.15–16: τί θέλετέ μοι δοῦναι κἀγὼ ὑμῖν παραδώσω αὐτόν; Οἱ δὲ ἔστησαν αὐτῷ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια. Καὶ ἀπὸ τότε ἐζήτει εὐκαιρίαν ἵνα αὐτὸν παραδῷ (*"What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him*). For Matthew's emphasis on Judas' greed, see Luz (2005), p. 345. For an estimation of the value of the thirty silver coins, probably equivalent to a month's wages, see France (2007), pp. 978–979.

to betray Jesus: δρομαῖος ἄπεισιν ἐπὶ τὸ τῷ διαβόλῳ δοκοῦν, καὶ καθάπερ *οἰστρῶν καὶ δεδονημένος* τῆς μὲν ἑστίας ἐξάλλεται (2.375,4–5 Pusey).[462] A variation of the same image occurs in Book 13: 13.9–10 δαίμονος ἀντιπάλοιο φιλοκτεάνῳ τινὶ κέντρῳ / ἀργυρέην ἐπὶ λύσσαν ἀνοιστρήσαντος Ἰούδαν. The metaphor of the gadfly (ἀνοιστρήσαντος), combined with the similar metaphor of the horse-goad (κέντρον), is again associated with the desire for silver, where John states plainly that the devil penetrated into Judas' heart and made him betray Jesus.[463]

Judas' character is described further in *Par.* 6.223–230 (~ John 6.70–71). This passage includes all his characteristics and the role he will play in the development of the events, adding further details to those of the Gospel:

***Par.* 6.223–230**	**John 6.70–71**
καὶ εἷς ἐναρίθμιος ὑμῖν δήιος, ἀλλοπρόσαλλος, ὁμέστιός ἐστι μαθηταῖς διάβολος νέος ἄλλος ἐν ὀψιγόνοισιν ἀκούων ἔννεπε σημαίνων ὁμοδόρπιον Ἰσκαριώτην αἰνοτόκου Σίμωνος ἐπίκλοπον υἱὸν Ἰούδαν. οὗτος γάρ μιν ἔμελλε πορεῖν ζωαρκεῖ πότμῳ χρυσομανὴς δολίης πεφορημένον εἰς λίνον ἄγρης, εἷς γεγαὼς ἑτάρων δυοκαίδεκα.	Καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολός ἐστιν. Ἔλεγεν δὲ τὸν Ἰούδαν Σίμωνος Ἰσκαριώτην· οὗτος γὰρ ἔμελλεν αὐτὸν παραδιδόναι εἷς ὢν ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα.
"And yet among your number is one enemy. A fickle man, he shares the same hearth as the disciples, and will be called another, new devil among those born of late". He spoke, signaling the fellow-dining Iscariot, Judas, the cunning son of Simon the unhappy parent. For he was going to bring Him to His life-sustaining death, mad after gold, driving Him towards the net of a deceitful hunt, though he was one of the twelve disciples.	"And yet one of you is a devil". He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.

462 *He runs full speed to do the will of Satan, and like one stung and goaded on to madness, he departs.*

463 John 13.2: τοῦ διαβόλου ἤδη βεβληκότος εἰς τὴν καρδίαν ἵνα παραδοῖ αὐτὸν Ἰούδας Σίμωνος Ἰσκαριώτου (*when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him*). On the terminology employed by Nonnus, see Greco (2004), pp. 76–78. Greco points out that the motive of greed occurs in John Chrysostom's *De Proditione Iudae* (for instance, PG 49.376,33, 45, 56, *al.*). For the devil entering Judas' heart, see also Scognamiglio (2011), pp. 67–68.

John reveals only the identity of the person of whom Jesus is talking (Judas, son of Simon, the Iscariot) and says of him that διάβολός ἐστιν, a phrase that each of the disciples interprets according to his intellectual abilities. Nonnus goes more deeply into John's words, adding an interpretation which reveals their full meaning. Judas, who will betray Jesus, belongs to the close circle of the Twelve and is a lover of money (χρυσομανής). It is greed that will lead him to this act. Such details are absent from the Gospel. In trying to portray Judas' character fully, the poet elaborates on phrasings which will later recur in a sort of formulaic repetitions, applied both to Judas himself and to all the impious who share his diabolic nature and dreadful plans.

Two aspects of Judas' character are particularly significant: his deceptive nature and his obsession with money. Both of them clearly appear in *Par.* 12.22–26 (~ John 12.6). We are in Bethany, and Mary, the sister of Lazarus, has just anointed Jesus with her precious oil (*Par.* 12.11 πιστικῆς … ἀπὸ νάρδου). Judas, who was also the treasurer of the community, objects to this act and suggests that the oil could have been sold and the money given to the poor (*Par.* 12.17–21 ~ John 12.4–5). His words are introduced with καὶ φθονεροῖς στομάτεσσι δολοπλόκος εἶπεν Ἰούδας (*Par.* 12.17). In Scheindler's view, expressed in his edition, in which the Gospel text appears under the relevant passages of the *Paraphrase*, Nonnus seems to have omitted some of the explanatory words of John 12.4 λέγει οὖν (εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) Ἰούδας (Σίμωνος Ἰσκαριώτης, ὁ μέλλων αὐτὸν παραδιδόναι). Such an assumption is not necessary:[464] by φθονεροῖς στομάτεσσι, Nonnus refers to the διάβολος νέος ἄλλος of *Par.* 6.225, where Jesus anticipated the disciple's intentions, so that there is no need to repeat his genealogy and the facts that follow. Similarly, *Par.* 6.227 ἐπίκλοπον υἱὸν Ἰούδαν highlights a trait of Judas' character which can lead us to understand the following passage:

***Par.* 12.22–26**	**John 12.6**
τοῦτο δὲ κεῖνος ἔλεξε δολοπλόκος, οὐχ ὅτι φωτῶν ἀκτεάνων ἀλέγιζεν ἀμείλιχος, ἀλλ' ὅτι μοῦνον κλέπτης ἦν κτεάνων νικώμενος· εἶχε δὲ κίστην, τῇ ἔνι χαλκὸς ἔκειτο· καὶ ὁππόσα βούλετο, χηλῷ αὐτὸς ἀνηέρταζε φύλαξ κακός.	εἶπεν δὲ τοῦτο οὐχ ὅτι περὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ἔμελεν αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ὅτι κλέπτης ἦν καὶ τὸ γλωσσόκομον εἶχεν καὶ τὰ βαλλόμενα ἐβάσταζεν.

464 Scheindler in his apparatus counts as l. 18 the verse ὃς μιαροῖς μιν ἔμελλεν Ἰουδαίοισι προδώσειν, without accepting it in the text. This line is transmitted by a family of manuscripts (see Sylburg 1596, note on p. 155).

(*cont.*)

Par. 12.22–26	John 12.6
That wile-weaving man said this, not because he cared for dispossessed men, that ruthless one, but only because he was a thief, defeated by possessions. He held the urn, in which bronze coins were kept; and as many as he wanted he would lift from the coffer himself, a bad guard.	He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the money-bag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

Judas' objection confirms his usual deceptive behaviour. The adjective δολοπλόκος occurs twice in this passage (*Par.* 12.17 and 22). It is well attested in the Nonnian poems:[465] it occurs twenty times in the *Dionysiaca*, while in *Paraphrase* it describes the words of Caiaphas in 11.201, who is also described as ἐπίκλοπος at l. 119. A similar compounded form also refers to the Pharisees at 11.236 δολορραφέων Φαρισαίων, while δόλος occurs at *Par.* 12.83 δόλος ἡμείων θανατηφόρος οὐδὲν ὀνήσει (~ Jo. 12.19 θεωρεῖτε ὅτι οὐκ ὠφείλετε οὐδέν;). The parallel vocabulary implies that the Pharisees and Judas work on the same project. The adjective δολοπλόκος is used in a sense close to that of ἀπατήλιος, δόλιος, δολόεις, σκολιός in the *Dionysiaca*,[466] always associated, as Spanoudakis observes, with "deception by dissimulating one's real identity or intention".[467] The poet's lexical choices complement his exegetical aim. Δολοπλόκος underlines the fact that Judas hides his real intention, which is to steal, but the word suggests Judas' identification with the devil. The devil's deceptive skills are a traditional subject in Christian exegesis, starting with the narrative of the snake in *Gen.* 3 and, in particular, 3.13, where Eve claims that the snake deceived her.[468]

465 For the association of the epithet δολοπλόκος with cult in Archaic lyric poetry and for its complex semantic aspects, see Livrea (1989), p. 186, on *Par.* 18.156, where it refers to the crowd of the Jews, as is explained by Cyril 3.51,20–21 Pusey πονηρῶς τε σφόδρα μεμηχάνεται τὸ σαιώρημα καὶ ὁ τῆς συκοφαντίας ἐξηρτύθη τρόπος (*with the utmost wicked intent the scheme was devised and the false testimony was prepared*).

466 See Peek (1968–1975), s.v. δόλιος. The verbs πλέκω and ὑφαίνω are thus used in the metaphoric sense of "making", which is usual in Nonnus. See Gigli Piccardi (1985), pp. 152–153; Agosti (2003), on *Par.* 5.64.

467 See Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 332, on *Par.* 11.201b. For the adjective as referring to the Jews in the *Paraphrase*, see Ypsilanti and Franco (2017), pp. 166–167, 169.

468 Ὁ ὄφις ἠπάτησέν με καὶ ἔφαγον (*The serpent deceived me, and I ate*). In this sense, cf. also [Epiph.] *Hom.* 4 (PG 43.481,30–32) τὸ πρόβατον τὸ πλανώμενον, ὅπερ ὁ ἀπατεὼν ὄφις δολοτρό-

In fact, the principal activity of the evil is to endlessly work towards men's deception, as is often stated in monastic literature.[469] The temptation is the elaboration of a speech, and, as the snake did, the tempter typically deceives by his eloquence. This assumes a great importance in the context of theological controversies, since the words of the heretics are assimilated to the devil's words.[470]

The words of the devil must be defeated in a rhetorical ἀγών, just as they are when Jesus is tempted in the desert in the Synoptic accounts (Mat. 4.1–11, Mark 1.12–13, Luke 4.11–13): for instance, in Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* 9.1–11 and 21.1–13 Bartelink[471] the Saint defeats the devil by quoting the Scriptures. In the Nonnian passage Jesus answers Judas not by quoting any Biblical text, but with words which are, nevertheless, prophetic, as they refer to Jesus' own death: *Par.* 12.30 φοίνιος ἡμετέρων κτερέων ἐπιτύμβιος ὥρη (*the murderous Hour … / bringing me to my tomb and to the funeral shrouds*). This phrase, containing the word ὥρη which possesses important theological significance,[472] is qualified by the adjective φοίνιος which points to a violent death and renders John 12.7 εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ ἐνταφιασμοῦ μου (*for the day of my burial*). By substituting the terms indicating time, Nonnus emphasises the perspective of the Cross and the Resurrection hidden in Jesus' words. Cyril's interpretation is not particularly refined on this point. Cyril underlines, along with the other exegetes, the falseness of Judas' words[473] and focuses on the fact that Judas was a thief and a lover of money.[474] His conclusion is that donations to

ποις τεχνάσμασιν ἠπάτησε, καὶ κακίας ὁδοὺς ὑπέδειξε (*the wandering sheep, which the devious serpent deceived with treacherous tricks and to which he showed the paths of evil*; our translation).

469 Cf., for instance, Nilus *De mal. cog.* 27 (PG 79.1232 D) = Evagrius 37.28–33 Guillaumont et al. (A. Guillaumont et al., *Évagre le Pontique. Sur les pensées*, Sources chrétiennes 438, Paris 1998) πάντα γὰρ ἡμῶν τὰ σχήματα οἱ πονηροὶ περιεργάζονται δαίμονες … ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν καθ' ἡμῶν δολιότητα μελετῶσιν.

470 See below, *H. Interpretatio, 2. Trinitarian Theology, a. Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity i. Par. 14.108–114 and* (*the lacking*) *ὁ πατήρ μείζων μου ἐστίν. John 4.22b*, end of section.

471 G.J.M. Bartelink, *Athanase d'Alexandrie, Vie d'Antoine*. Sources chrétiennes 400 (Paris 2004).

472 Cf. the use of ὥρα in John 12.27, where the noun refers to the "hour" of Jesus' suffering. On the theological importance of ὥρα, especially as the term which designates the stages of Christ's life, among which those with eschatological significance, see H.C. Hahn in Brown, Coenen, Beyreuther, Bietenhard (1978), vol. 3, pp. 848–849.

473 *Jo.* 2.302,11–12 Pusey προσποιεῖται διὰ τῆς εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἀγάπης μέμφεσθαι, διότι μύρον προσέφερε, καὶ οὐκ ἀργύριον (*he pretends to find fault with her out of love for the poor because she brought perfume and not money*).

474 *Jo.* 2.302,18–19 Pusey κλέπτης ἦν καὶ ἱερόσυλος τὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἀνατιθέμενα χρήματα κλέπτων (*he*

the poor must be preceded by donations to God. However, John Chrysostom in his homily 65 (on John 11.49–12.8) clearly associates Jesus' words in John 12.7 with Judas' betrayal: Chrysostom says that with this phrase, Christ πάλιν τὸν προδότην ἀνέμνησεν (*he had previously rebuked him often*, PG 59.363,28–29).

Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2], p. 368), observed that John 12.6 ὅτι κλέπτης ἦν looks like a later interpretation of the events, belonging to times when the personality of Judas had already been established. John does not say anything about the amount Judas received and, according to Schnackenburg, "the historical motif of the shameful deed remains obscure". On the other hand, interpretation of Judas' motivation does not change the point that Scripture has to be fulfilled (John 13.18; 17.12). Judas' quality as a thief assumes great importance in Cyril's commentary and in Nonnus, too: Cyril describes τὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἀνατιθέμενα χρήματα (2.302,18–19 Pusey) as the donations that people offer in churches. This may have influenced Nonnus' description of the γλωσσόκομον, which is quite detailed both in *Par.* 12.24–26 and in 13.120 (~ John 13.29).[475] In the latter passage, when, during the Last Supper, Judas leaves the room after receiving the bread Jesus gave him, the Johannine verb is changed by the poet into ἀνηέρταζεν, which makes a significant difference. John merely says that Judas was the keeper of the chest, while Nonnus adds that he was taking the chest away. The Nonnian verb thus assumes the same meaning that ἐβάσταζεν has in John 12.6 (καὶ τὸ γλωσσόκομον εἶχεν καὶ τὰ βαλλόμενα ἐβάσταζεν, *having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it*), which is replaced there again by ἀνηέρταζε (12.26). The semantic interpretation of βαστάζω in the sense of "steal", along with these lexical correspondences, results in the impressive depiction of Judas disappearing into the dark of the night holding the chest with the money of the community at *Par.* 13.120: a visible demonstration of his φιλοκερδὴς λύσση (*Par.* 13.124).

Remarkably, Nonnus adds to the scene of Jesus' arrest a reference to Judas' greed, although Judas is simply an onlooker about whom nothing more is said in John:

was a thief, and a sacrilegious one at that, stealing the money that was offered to God) and 2.303,5–8 ὅμως ὁ Κύριος ἐλέγχει πάλιν τὸν Ἰούδαν ὅτι οὐ δι' εὐλάβειαν ταῦτα ἔλεγεν ἀλλ' ὅτι αἰσχροκερδὴς ἦν καὶ δι' ὀλίγον κέρδος προδοῦναι ἔμελλε τὸν διδάσκαλον (*nevertheless, the Lord rebukes Judas because he said this not from reverence but because he was greedy and was about to betray his teacher for a little profit*).

475 On *Par.* 13.120, see Greco (2004), pp. 151–152.

Par. 18.31–34	John 18.5
καὶ θρασὺς ἀντιβίοισι παρίστατο πομπὸς Ἰούδας, ὅς μιν ἀφαυροτάτοιο μινυνθαδίου χάριν ὄλβου, υἷα θεοῦ παρέδωκεν ἀτέρμονος ἐλπίδα κόσμου, υἷα θεοῦ παρέδωκε.	εἱστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδοὺς αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῶν.
And audacious Judas was standing by the side of His enemies as their guide, Judas, who for the sake of a worthless and ephemeral deal handed over the Son of God, the hope of the boundless world— the Son of God he handed over!	Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

In this short passage Nonnus inserted a number of elements independent of the Gospel. The most striking difference from the model is the "psychological" description of the traitor. In John, Judas is described simply as παραδιδούς, in a rather neutral way, whereas, in the Nonnian rephrasing he is described as θρασύς, an adjective that the poet also associates with the Jewish crowd, to Caiaphas and to the Pharisees,[476] and his active role is stressed by the fact that he is leading (πομπός), the crowd of the opponents of Christ.[477] The poet also stresses the meanness of the motive that lies behind the betrayal: ἀφαυροτάτοιο μινυνθαδίου χάριν ὄλβου.[478] A further rhetorical element which highlights the enormity of Judas' crime is the *anaphora* in lines 33–34, which is made even more solemn by the pause of the *caesura*.[479]

In his reworking of the Johannine accounts of Judas' presentation and actions in Books 6, 12, 13 and 18, Nonnus employs observations drawn from Patristic and other Christian literature. Judas' main features, deceitfulness and great greed for money, are connected with the devil, one of whose traits is deceitfulness and who instilled greed in Judas, as an οἶστρος and *mania* (cf. χρυ-

476 When he uses it in its negative sense; see also above, *Peter*, with reference to its attribution to Peter in its positive sense.

477 Livrea (1989, p. 126) points out that in this context the adjective ἀντίβιος has lost the bellicose connotation that it has in Homeric usage and alludes to the Devil, the Antichrist.

478 Livrea's edition (line 32) reads ἔργου instead of ὄλβου. See Livrea (1989), p. 127.

479 For which see above, *B. Synonymic Amplificatio and Verbal / Adjectival Accumulation, 2. Anaphora*.

σομανής). In the case of Mary Magdalene, discussed above, the powerful urge that drives her to action (to tell the disciples the news of the Resurrection), also intertextually connected with a superhuman power, is presented positively as the result of her love for Christ and of her excitement because of the supernatural situation brought about by the Resurrection. Judas, on the other hand, is driven to his disastrous action by ultimate superhuman evil and is assimilated to it. His *ethopoea* is ethical, rather than pathetic, because treachery and greed are features of one's character. The devil's decisive action towards him is momentary (*Par.* 6.201 ἀργυρέης νούσοιο νόον δεδονημένος οἴστρῳ). This might at first sight seem to be the activation of a feeling, but in fact it works on Judas' already corrupt ἦθος in a more enduring manner.

G.4 *Pontius Pilate*[480]

In the literary sources, Pilate is mentioned by Philo of Alexandria, who wrote the polemical treaty *Legatio ad Gaium* in the 40s of the first century A.D., and by Flavius Josephus, who composed the *Jewish War* during the 70s and published the *Antiquities of the Jews* some twenty years later.[481] They both describe Pilate negatively, as harsh and insensitive towards his Jewish subjects.[482] Josephus mentions an unpopular measure devised by the Roman governor, who decided to use the sacred treasure of the Jews to defray the expenses involved in the building of an aqueduct (*Jewish War* 2.175), thus provoking disturbances. Furthermore, both Josephus and Philo also refer to an episode, in which, on Pilate's initiative, effigies of Tiberius were displayed in the sacred area of the Temple, thus provoking a reaction on the part of the Jews, whose law forbade them to worship images.

Philo (*Legatio ad Gaium*, 299–305)[483] reports that decorative shields carrying the name of the Emperor were displayed in Herod's palace in Jerusalem and were eventually removed at the request of Tiberius himself. Josephus (*Jewish War* 2.169–171 and *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.55–59)[484] states that Pil-

480 Part of this contribution will appear in the article by L. Franco and M. Ypsilanti, "Presentation of Biblical figures in poetic paraphrase: John the Baptist and Pontius Pilate in Nonnus' *Paraphrase* of St. John's Gospel", in F. Doroszewski, K. Jażdżewska (eds.), *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context III: Old Questions and New Perspectives* (Leiden 2021, pp. 372–376).

481 His name also appears in a short passage in Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.44).

482 See Bond (1998), esp. pp. 24–48 for Philo and 49–109 for Josephus.

483 In *Legatio ad Gaium* 299, it is explicitly stated that Pilate intended to provoke the Jews.

484 In both passages Josephus implies that Pilate could reasonably have expected some kind of social upheaval as a consequence of his action: *Jewish War* 2.169–170, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.55–56.

ate during the night secretly introduced into Jerusalem standards depicting the Emperor. Both sources stress the insensitivity of the governor and the fact that the reaction of the Jews was predictable. Nevertheless, Pilate is not depicted as someone who quickly resorts to unnecessary violence.[485] Josephus notes that at the sight of the Jews prostrating and baring their throats in front of his soldiers the governor was astonished by the strength of the devotion they showed to their law, and on these grounds he eventually removed the images of the Emperors.[486] However, his admiration was apparently short-lived, for shortly after this event Josephus reports the episode involving the aqueduct.[487] Pilate is mentioned in another two passages of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, one of which concerns Jesus' trial. Here Josephus simply states that Christ was a "wise man" and that Pilate, upon hearing Him accused by important representatives of the Jews, condemned Him to be crucified. In this short passage Josephus does not give any details about Pilate's attitude towards Jesus. Later on in his account (18.85–89), Josephus reports that Pilate put down a Samaritan uprising and was consequently ordered by the Roman governor of Syria, Lucius Vitellius, to return to Rome.

In addition to references to him in Jewish writers, Pilate is mentioned in all four Gospels, which give various pictures of him. Matthew diverges from the other three in at least two details: the washing of the hands[488] and the episode of Pilate's wife trying to persuade her husband not to get involved with the "just man", claiming that the previous night she was warned through a disturbing dream.[489] The picture that emerges is that of a less cunning and manipulative character than the figure described by Mark and John, and certainly more indifferent.[490] In Mark, Pilate is mentioned in the episode of the trial (15.1–15) and after Christ's execution, when he allows Joseph of Arimathea to remove Jesus' body (15.43–45). The Roman governor is depicted as a harsh and shrewd politi-

485 Bond (1998), p. 60.

486 *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.59 καὶ Πιλᾶτος θαυμάσας τὸ ἐχυρὸν αὐτῶν ἐπὶ φυλακῇ τῶν νόμων παραχρῆμα τὰς εἰκόνας ἐκ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων ἐπανεκόμισεν εἰς Καισάρειαν. See further Feldman (1993), pp. 18 and 27, and Naiden (2006), pp. 224–225.

487 See Bond (1998), p. 75.

488 Mat. 27.24 ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Πιλᾶτος ὅτι οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον θόρυβος γίνεται, λαβὼν ὕδωρ ἀπενίψατο τὰς χεῖρας ἀπέναντι τοῦ ὄχλου, λέγων, Ἀθῷός εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τούτου· ὑμεῖς ὄψεσθε (*so when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves"*). For the ambiguity of this act, which has be regarded as an indication of either Pilate's recognition of Christ's innocence or his hypocrisy and guilt, see Luz (2005), pp. 504–506.

489 Mat. 27.19.

490 See Bond (1998), p. 136.

cian who eventually asks the crowd to make a decision about the fate of the prisoner in order to avoid a difficult situation, but the influence of the mob on the condemnation of Jesus does not imply that Mark is exculpating Pilate.[491] In the Markan narrative, the governor is amazed by the fact that Jesus does not answer his question.[492] Yet it cannot be inferred from this that Pilate has any respect or admiration for Jesus.

The description of Luke is probably the least flattering to the Roman governor, who is presented as cowardly and indecisive. The trial scene differs from that given in the other Gospels, in that Pilate seems so eager to get rid of the case, that initially he sends the prisoner to Herod on the grounds that Jesus' case is covered by his jurisdiction.[493] After Herod sends Jesus back again to Pilate without any charges being laid, the governor declares three times that he does not find Jesus guilty.[494] Nevertheless, he is eventually overwhelmed by the pressure of the crowd and condemns Christ to be crucified. In the light of "Luke's positive evaluation of the majority of Roman administrative or military personnel",[495] the fact that Pilate repeatedly states Jesus' innocence has been interpreted as an assertion that to be a Christian was not an offence against Roman law, whereas his weak attitude gave the Jews the chance of ensuring the execution of Jesus.[496]

The Johannine Gospel provides us with the most complex and detailed account: one of the differences from the Synoptics is that in the Gospel of John Jesus is arrested by a contingent of Roman troops,[497] whereas in the Synoptics the Jews seize Him. Bond argues that in John's Gospel, Pilate is an arrogant despot, who mocks both the Jews and Jesus throughout the trial.[498] In the first

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491 See Bond (1998), p. 104.

492 Mark 15.5: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκέτι οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίθη, ὥστε θαυμάζειν τὸν Πιλᾶτον (*but Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed*). Bond 1998 points out (p. 108) that "under Roman criminal law, an accused person who made no response to the charges was counted in the same way as if he had pleaded guilty".

493 Luke 23.7: καὶ ἐπιγνοὺς ὅτι ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας Ἡρῴδου ἐστὶν ἀνέπεμψεν αὐτὸν πρὸς Ἡρῴδην (*and when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod*).

494 Luke 23.15 οὐδὲν ἄξιον θανάτου ἐστὶν πεπραγμένον αὐτῷ (*nothing deserving death has been done by him*), Luke 23.20 πάλιν δὲ ὁ Πιλᾶτος προσεφώνησεν αὐτοῖς, θέλων ἀπολῦσαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν (*Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus*), Luke 23.22 ὁ δὲ τρίτον εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς, τί γὰρ κακὸν ἐποίησεν οὗτος; οὐδὲν αἴτιον θανάτου εὗρον ἐν αὐτῷ (*a third time he said to them, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death"*).

495 Bond (1998), p. 141.

496 See Bond (1998), pp. 160 and 162.

497 John 18.12.

498 On the interpretation of Pilate's behaviour throughout the trial, see Bond (1998), pp. 174–172.

scene in front of the Jews, his prompting that the Jews take Jesus and judge Him according to their law[499] is, in Bond's view, a provocation and a means of reasserting his judicial authority,[500] rather than than a serious suggestion, since Pilate knows that their own law does not allow the Jews to condemn anyone to death. Similarly, in telling the Jews, "Behold your King"!,[501] he is mocking the prisoner and humiliating the Jews at the same time. Indeed, in Bond's view, in delivering Christ to the Jews, Pilate is demanding that they obey Caesar as the only King, and this seems to be confirmed by the *titulus* placed on the Cross. The Jews are not satisfied with the inscription that Pilate has ordered to be affixed to the Cross, which in fact turns out to be offensive towards them, as it declares Jesus to be their King.[502] In ignoring their objections, the governor is once again boldly affirming his authority.

Only twice does Pilate moderate his arrogance, once when he asks himself "What is truth?"[503] and later, when, as soon as he realises the religious charges against Jesus are potentially much more dangerous than the political charges, he reacts with "fear".[504] By this stage he would prefer to set the prisoner free, but he is aware that this would be a political mistake, and so eventually he pronounces the death sentence, even after having declared three times (as in Luke) that Jesus is innocent.

Alongside these texts, there is also a tradition which is much more favourable to Pilate. Tacitus briefly mentions him where he describes the measures taken by Nero against the Christians, after the fire of Rome. He refers to Pilate without expressing any negative judgement and inaccurately calls him "procurator".[505] Pilate is considered a Christian by Tertullian, who in his *Apologeticus* states that when the governor reported the events concerning Jesus' trial to the Emperor Tiberius, deep within his conscience he had converted to Christianity.[506] Although the statement is generally considered to be

499 John 18.31.

500 Bond (1998), p. 176.

501 John 19.14.

502 John 19.19–22.

503 John 18.38: λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλᾶτος, Τί ἐστιν ἀλήθεια;

504 John 19.8: ὅτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλᾶτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη (…).

505 Tac. *Ann.* 15.44. Among the contemporary sources mentioning Pilate there is also an epigraph found at Caesarea and published in 1961. In a dedicatory epigraph relating to a building dedicated to Tiberius, Pontius Pilate is described as Prefect of Judaea. See A. Frova, "L'iscrizione di Ponzio Pilato a Cesarea", *Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo. Classe di Lettere e Scienze morali e storiche* 95 (1961), pp. 419–434.

506 Tert. *Apol.* 21.24: *ea omnia super Christo Pilatus, et ipse iam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Caesari tunc Tiberio nuntiavit.*

false, it is a significant piece of evidence for the construction of the legend of a Christian Pilate. The Christian historian Eusebius in his *History of the Church* (*Hist. Eccl.* 2.7 Bardy) states that the governor committed suicide after the execution of Jesus. Furthermore, an overall positive picture of the Roman governor emerges from the tradition in the apocryphal Gospels. The *Acts of Pilate* are contained in the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus. The Byzantine version of this text[507] contains elements from all the Synoptics,[508] although it differs in several aspects.[509] Related to the gospel of Nicodemus is that of Gamaliel, of Coptic origin, which describes Pilate as a martyr, after he converted to Christianity. He is still revered as a saint in the Ethiopian Church together with his wife, named Procula or Procla (who is considered a saint also in the Orthodox Church), and he is considered a martyr in the Coptic Church.

Despite the fact that Nonnus follows the Johannine account, his portrayal of Pilate is much more positive than the picture provided by John and the Synoptics. It has been pointed out that the Johannine narrative of the trial can be divided into seven scenes articulated by a dramaturgical structure based on the changes of scene, with Pilate going back and forth from outside the *praetorium*, in front of the Jews, and then inside with the prisoner.[510] This structure is substantially reproduced in Nonnus' presentation of the events, although the depiction of the Roman governor diverges from the *Vorlage*.

The positive picture of Pilate is evident in the adjectives employed by the paraphrast to describe the governor. For example, he is described as "wise" three times: 19.38 καὶ σοφὸς ὡς κλύε τοῦτο δικασπόλος ἔτρεμεν ἀνήρ, 19.30 καὶ Πιλά-

507 R. Gounelle, *Evangelium Nicodemi Byzantinum* (Turnhout 2008), p. 31: although the oldest manuscript is datable to the twelfth century, Latin, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Syriac translations of the Greek text were circulating as early as the fifth century. The earliest of the Byzantine recessions (M^1) was composed between the ninth and the eleventh century (pp. 68–73). Gounelle edition presents the three Byzantine versions (M^1, M^2, M^3) in synoptic fashion.

508 For instance Procla's dream, which also occurs in Matthew. The dialogue in the trial partially resembles John's. Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, as happens in Luke, etc.

509 For instance, the episode involving Nicodemus, who addresses Pilate in the attempt to have Jesus acquitted and the description of the sick cured by the Lord who, one after another, attempt the same; the lament of the Virgin and the dialogue between Joseph of Arimathea and Pilate, who gives him permission to take Jesus' body; Pilate bursting to tears after Joseph tells him that he knows he tried to avoid the execution. See *Evangelium Nicodemi Byzantinum*, p. 267.

510 The sections are the following: 18, 28–32; 18, 33–38; 18, 38–40; 19, 1–3; 19, 4–8; 19, 9–11; 19, 12–16. On this topic, see R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, tr. John Marsh (Oxford 1963), p. 648, and Meeks (1967), p. 62.

τος λαοῖσιν ἐχέφρονα ῥήξατο φωνήν and 19.103 ἦν δὲ σοφῷ καλάμῳ τετυπωμένον (in the last two cases Pilate is defined "wise" by *hypallage*, since ἐχέφρονα is attributed to his voice and σοφῷ to the *stilus* used to write the inscription on the Cross).[511] Another key adjective, employed by Nonnus in order to acquit Pilate, is ἀέκων. This stresses Pilate's reluctance to put Jesus to death and appears in a line built on an alliterative rhythm, where the poet inserts an antithesis with the privative alpha (ἑκὼν ἀέκων):[512] 19.83 Χριστὸν ἑκὼν ἀέκων ἀδίκῳ παρέδωκεν ὀλέθρῳ. The idea of Pilate's unwillingness is a Nonnian addition, absent in the *Vorlage*,[513] which the poet has most probably adopted from Cyril's comment, where the adjective is also employed.[514] The *iunctura* ἑκὼν ἀέκων (an oxymoron built through the use of a privative *alpha*, which is a kind of word play attested in both Nonnian poems),[515] also represents an echo of the Homeric verse καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ σοὶ δῶκα ἑκὼν ἀέκοντί γε θυμῷ (*Il.* 4.43). Here Zeus is telling Hera that although he "willingly" allowed to her to help the Greeks against the Trojans, deep inside, his θυμός was "unwilling", a statement that also fits Pilate's attitude. Just as Zeus was unwillingly forced to comply with his wife's wishes, Pilate eventually does yield to the pressure of the Jewish crowd. Moreover, the Homeric verb δῶκα perhaps lies behind the Nonnian compound παρέδωκεν. The Homeric phrase, so Eustathius says in his Commentary to the *Iliad*, became a proverbial expression.[516]

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511 It is worth noting that we find both δικασπόλος and ἐχέφρων in a line of Gregory of Nazianzus (ἐν δὲ δίκης θώκοισι, δικασπόλος ὥς τις ἐχέφρων, *Carm. Mor.* 628,1).

512 This kind of word play with ἑκών is also found in Euripides, in different contexts: for instance, *Andr.* 357 ἑκόντες οὐκ ἄκοντες, οὐδὲ βώμιοι; *IT* 512 φεύγω τρόπον γε δή τιν' οὐχ ἑκὼν ἑκών; *Phoen.* 630 οὐχ ἑκὼν γὰρ ἦλθον, ἄκων δ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.

513 The line corresponds to John 19.16, which states merely that Pilate handed over Jesus: ὅτε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῇ. Παρέλαβον οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, κτλ. (*so he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus*, etc.).

514 3.79,8–14 Pusey: ταῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀκράτοις ὀργαῖς ἀπονέμει λοιπὸν καὶ *οὐχ ἑκὼν ὁ Πιλᾶτος* τὴν εἰς πᾶν ὁτιοῦν καὶ τῶν ἔξω νόμων ἀποδρομὴν καὶ τὴν τοῖς δικάζουσι πρέπουσαν ἐξουσίαν ἀφελὼν ἀταμιεύτοις ἤδη φέρεσθαι τοῖς θυμοῖς ἀνεγκλήτως ἐφίησι, σταυροῦν ἐπιτρέψας τὸν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ μὲν τῶν φαύλων ἁλόντα παντελῶς, ὅτι δὲ μόνον Υἱὸν ἑαυτὸν ἔφη Θεοῦ παραλόγως κρινόμενον (*Pilate* ***against his will*** *grants free course to the burning anger of the Jews for them to do whatever they want, even against the law. He cedes his authority as judge and allows them to be carried by their uncontrolled passion with impunity. He permits them to crucify him who was convicted of no crime at all but was condemned without basis merely because he said that he was the Son of God*).

515 Although the word play with ἑκών is found in Euripides (see three notes up), this kind of oxymoronic expressions based on privative *alpha* is attested in both Nonnus' works; for instance, *Dion.* 17.42 οἶκον ἄοικον; 48.803 μῆτερ ἀμήτωρ, *al.*

516 At *Il.* 1.699,34 τὸ δέ "ἑκὼν ἀέκοντί γε θυμῷ" ἔπεσε μὲν εἰς κοινὴν παροιμίαν τήν "ἑκὼν ἀέκων

In Cyril's comment we find other passages, in which Cyril implies that Pilate is not completely to blame. For example, in the comment on John 19.15,[517] it is asserted that Pilate felt deep sorrow (λίαν λυπεῖται) over Jesus' fate.[518] Similar statements are present in the *Homilies on John* by John Chrysostom, where the author holds that Pilate scourged Jesus in order to help him, hoping that this punishment would soothe the fury of the Jews (*Homily* 85).[519] This idea is stressed again in the same homily where it is stated that Pilate tried to shield from Jesus the accusations made by the Jews.[520] The view that Pilate, albeit guilty, was less at fault and less guilty than the Jews is also found in Basil's *Quaestiones*.[521]

One of the distinctive features of Nonnus' Pilate is the speed that typifies his actions and thinking. Although the swiftness of a person's movements is frequently mentioned in the *Paraphrase*, the speed of Pilate's actions suggests both a zealous attitude, combined with a sharp mind, and a lack of inner calm. He is defined ταχύμητις at *Par*. 19.16. Similar adjectives recur elsewhere. Pilate is described as ταχυεργός at 18.140 (καὶ Πιλάτος ταχυεργὸς ἑῆς ἐξήλασεν αὐλῆς), which may be translated as "zealous" with an emphasis on swiftness. At 18.149, the adverb ὀξύ is employed in a positive way to characterise Pilate's intellectual capacity, since he immediately understands that the Jews are driven by hatred to accuse Christ (18.149 ὁ δὲ φθόνον ὀξὺ νοήσας). At 18.181, when, after having asked the famous question "What is truth"?, Pilate swiftly (ὀξύς) leaves his throne (ἀτρεκίη τί πέλει; καὶ ἑὸν θρόνον ὀξὺς ἐάσας), Livrea noted[522] that although the adjective is meant to underline the governor's zealous attitude towards his juridical duties, it also suggests his profound disquiet.

The reference to Pilate's ready perspicacity also occurs in 19.16 where he is described as ταχύμητις, in a passage in which his positive features are particularly emphatically accentuated:

τόδε τι πεποίηκα". Notably, the *Christus Patiens* contains a similar phrase, albeit one that conveys a completely different meaning, since it is refers to the willingness of Christ to undergo His Passion: *ἑκὼν γὰρ ἔτλη πότμον, οὔκουν ἀέκων* (l. 933).

517 Ἐκραύγασαν οὖν ἐκεῖνοι, Ἆρον ἆρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν (*They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him"!*).

518 *Jo*. 3.76,24–27 Pusey.

519 PG 59.455,56–456,8.

520 PG 59.456,30–32.

521 *Asceticon magnum sive Qaestiones* (*regulae brevius tractatae*), PG 31.1112,35–40.

522 Livrea (1989), p. 200.

***Par.* 19.16–32**

καὶ Πιλάτος ταχύμητις ἀνέδραμε δώματος ἔξω
ποσσὶ παλιννόστοισι καὶ ἴαχεν ἄφρονι λαῷ·
"ἔκτοθεν ἀνέρα τοῦτον ἐς ὑμέας ἄρτι κομίζω,
ὄφρα δὲ γινώσκητε· νοοπλανὲς οὐδὲν ἐν αὐτῷ
εὗρον ἐγὼ πραπίδεσσιν ἀμωμήτοισι δικάζων".
Ἀχράντοις δὲ πόδεσσι διέστιχε νόσφι μελάθρου
καὶ στέφος ὀξυέθειρος ὁμόπλοκον εἶχεν ἀκάνθης,
πορφυρέην τ' ἐσθῆτα διάβροχον αἵματι κόχλου·
καὶ Πιλάτος κατέλεξε πάλιν ζηλήμονι λαῷ·
"ἠνίδε ποικιλόνωτος ἀναίτιος ἵσταται ἀνήρ".
Καί μιν ἐσαθρήσαντες ἀθέσμιοι ἀρχιερῆες
καὶ βλοσυροὶ δρηστῆρες ἐπέβρεμον ἄπλετον ἠχώ·
"σταυρῷ σύμπλοκος οὗτος, ἐπήορος, ὄρθιος ἔστω
καὶ ποσὶ καὶ παλάμῃσι σιδήρεα κέντρα κομίζων"
καὶ Πιλάτος λαοῖσιν ἐχέφρονα ῥήξατο φωνήν·
"ὑμεῖς τετραπόρῳ σφηκώσατε τοῦτον ὀλέθρῳ·
οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ θανάτου πρόφασιν μίαν εὗρον ἐν αὐτῷ".

And Pilate swift of counsel ran back outside the building
with returning feet, and cried aloud to the senseless multitude:
"I now bring this man out before you,
so that you may know: no erring thoughts in him
have I found, passing judgment on his blameless heart".
With immaculate feet He marched through and out the hall,
and He had on the crown weaved out of sharp-haired thorns
and the purple garment soaked in the blood of the shellfish.
And Pilate spoke again to the envious multitude:
"Behold, a guiltless man stands with his back mottled".
And, gazing upon Him, the lawless high priests
and the grim servants roared out a ceaseless sound:
"Let him be lifted upright, entwined on a cross,
bearing the iron nails in both his feet and palms".
And Pilate let this sensible voice burst out on the multitude:
"You yourselves affix this man to his four-planked doom;
for I have not found in him any pretext for death".

John 19.4–6

καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πάλιν ἔξω ὁ Πιλᾶτος καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἴδε ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω, ἵνα γνῶτε ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ. Ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξω, φορῶν τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον καὶ τὸ πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον. Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Ὅτε οὖν εἶδον αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες, Σταύρωσον σταύρωσον. Λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλᾶτος, Λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε, ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.

Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him". So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man"! When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him"! Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him".

The name of the governor is repeatedly introduced by the same conjunction (καί), forming a dactyl, in ll. 16, 24, and 30. The adjective ταχύμητις describes Pilate's quick mind. The verb ἴαχεν suggests his efforts to persuade the "senseless crowd", ἄφρονι λαῷ of l. 17, and perhaps echoes the Biblical verse καὶ λαὸς ἄφρων παρώξυνεν τὸ ὄνομά σου (*Ps.* 73.18,2). Ἄφρων is consistently employed by Nonnus to describe the Jews, their high priests and the Pharisees.[523] In ll. 21–22, the poet elaborates on the concise Johannine statement ἵνα γνῶτε ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ. The Gospel's εὑρίσκω is modified into εὗρον, followed by the personal pronoun ἐγώ, which strengthens the fact that the Roman governor made his own judgement, as is confirmed by the participle δικάζων, which emphasises the role of Pilate, who acts as a law-abiding judge. This idea is further stressed by the expression πραπίδεσσιν ἀμωμήτοισι,[524] which characterises his soul as "blameless" or "unblemished".[525] This depiction is consistent with Nonnus' phrasing in Book 18, especially ll. 140 ff., where the paraphrast is careful to underline the correctness of the legal procedure (18.141 νηοπόλους δ' ἐρέεινεν ὀφειλομένῳ τινὶ θεσμῷ), once again reflecting Cyril's comment.[526] Pilate's benign attitude towards Jesus is highlighted by the statement ἠνίδε ποικιλόνωτος ἀναίτιος ἵσταται ἀνήρ, corresponding to the Johannine ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος. In the Nonnian re-elaboration, the idea of innocence is emphasised by the presence

523 Jews / Pharisees / high priests as ἄφρονες or with ἄφρονα features. Cf. also *Par.* 5.57, 8.44, 8.142, 10.86, 11.188, 18.182, 19.17. See Ypsilanti (2016), pp. 223–224 with n. 38. For the destructiveness towards Jesus of the people of Jerusalem and the attributes Nonnus gives them, see Rotondo (2017a), p. 190.

524 On the various meanings of term πραπίδες in the *Paraphrase* and in the *Dionysiaca*, see Caprara (2005), pp. 195–196 (comment on l. 66). The term is used in connection with *Eros*, envy and rage in the *Dionysiaca*, while in the *Paraphrase* the πραπίδες allow the communion with God: "Le πραπίδες rappresentano nella tradizione classica la sede delle passioni, e con questa valenza Nonno usa il termine nelle *Dionisiache*, mettendolo in relazione con l'Eros (33.92; 42.213; 48. 483), con l'invidia (8.107), con l'ira (31.24). Nella *Parafrasi* le πραπίδες sono la sede della comunione con Dio, ed è significativo che Nonno abbia scelto di usare questo termine, dal momento che nel pensiero giovanneo l'unione con Dio, anche nei termini di comprensione del Logos divino, dipende esclusivamente dal rapporto di amore che si stabilisce con Lui e che porta poi nella vita concreta all'obbedienza ai suoi comandamenti".

525 Livrea (1989) commented on the positive aspects of Pilate in the *Paraphrase*, in which Nonnus stresses his integrity and his genuine respect for the law and depicts the Jews as hypocrites who pretend to act lawfully, but, in fact, plot to ensure Christ's execution. See p. 179 (comment on *Par.* 18.142).

526 On this line, see Livrea 1989, p. 179. Cyril (3.48,22–24 Pusey) says ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἀλλογενὴς τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων δυσωπεῖται θεσμὸν καὶ τὸ κρατῆσαν παρ' ἐκείνοις ἔθος ἐξ εὐλαβείας αἰσχύνεται (*as a foreigner, he respects the Jewish law and treats their prevailing customs with reverence*).

of the term ἀναίτιος,[527] and the adjective ποικιλόνωτος, which refers to Christ's back that carries the marks of the flagellation. By inserting in Pilate's words ποικιλόνωτος, a rare and evocative Pindaric and Euripidean adjective,[528] which he often uses in the *Dionysiaca* to describe animal skins, garments, a shield and the celestial globe,[529] Nonnus is suggesting that the stains of blood have become a form of ornament on Christ's back, while, at the same time, recalling one of the pivotal concepts that characterise his poetics, *poikilia*.[530]

On the other hand, the negative qualities possessed by the crowd help cast Pilate in a positive light. The crowd is described as "senseless" (l. 17 ἄφρονι λαῷ) and "envious" (l. 24 ζηλήμονι λαῷ),[531] at almost the same *sedes*, which underlines the equivalence of these negative features. Correspondingly, the Jewish priests are described as ἀθέσμιοι, "unlawful", at l. 26 and this connotation seems to be once more influenced by Cyril's interpretation.[532] The voice of the governor is depicted as "wise" (ἐχέφρονα φωνήν), in contrast to the foolish attitude of the Jewish crowd (ἄφρονι λαῷ), a contraposition which is further stressed by the antithetical position of the pronouns ὑμεῖς / ἐγώ. The final assertion pronounced by Pilate, with a special stress on the negation οὐ, placed at the beginning of the verse (οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ θανάτου πρόφασιν μίαν εὗρον ἐν αὐτῷ, l. 32), is perhaps, as stated above, an echo of Cyril's comment,[533] but could also represent an echo of Luke 23.22 οὐδὲν αἴτιον θανάτου εὗρον ἐν αὐτῷ.

527 Cf. Hom. *Il.* 20.297 ἀλλὰ τί ἢ νῦν οὗτος ἀναίτιος ἄλγεα πάσχει …; (*but wherefore should he, a guiltless man, suffer woes … ?*; tr. Murray).

528 Pind. *Pyth.* 4.249 ποικιλόνωτον ὄφιν, Eur. *Herc.* 376 δόρκα ποικιλόνωτον, *IT* 1245 ποικιλόνωτος οἰνωπὸς δράκων, in all three passages the adjective denoting the skin of an animal. See Hadjittofi (2018), p. 169, n. 12.

529 For instance, *Dion.* 1.35, 2.575, 6.88, 7.343, 8.72, 14.357, 21.228, 37.702, *al.*

530 See Shorrock (2011), p. 73, Accorinti (1996), p. 34. Shorrock maintains that ποικιλόνωτος refers to the purple robe in which the soldiers dress Christ, while Accorinti holds that the adjective refers to Christ's own back, marked by the flagellation. See also Hadjittofi (2018), pp. 166–168 and above, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 4. Presentation of Christ in Danger and in Suffering as King*, discussion of *Par.* 19.4–14, end of section.

531 Envy is one of the characteristics displayed by Jews in Nonnus' depiction of them: for instance, *Par.* 18.146 καὶ φθονεροῖς στομάτεσσιν ἀνίαχον ἀρχιερῆες. See Ypsilanti and Franco (2017), pp. 169, 176–178. For Juvencus' similar attribution of vice to the Jews and his subsequent favourable portrayal of Pilate, see McGill (2016), p. 21.

532 Cf. *Jo.* 3.48,27–29 Pusey οἱ δὲ τοῖς θείοις ἐντάλμασι φρονοῦντες τὰ ἐναντία, καὶ μικρὰ κομιδῇ τῶν διὰ Μωυσέως τεθεσπισμένων φροντίσαντες, ἄδικον ἐργάζονται φόνον, κτλ. (*they, on the other hand, think contrary to the divine commands and pay very little attention to the decrees of Moses since they are attempting an injust murder*).

533 *Jo.* 3.66,23–27 Pusey Πιλάτου τε πρὸς ταῦτα καθηκόντως τε καὶ ἀδεκάστως καὶ οὔπω πρὸς χάριν δικάζοντος, λέγοντός τε διαῤῥήδην μηδεμίαν ηὑρῆσθαι πρόφασιν ἐν αὐτῷ (*when Pilate rendered a judgment that was just and impartial and not to their liking, saying publicly that he found no charge against him*, etc.).

Nonnus' sympathetic attitude towards the Roman governor is particularly evident in another passage of the same book: 19.39–40 καὶ σοφὸς ὡς κλύε τοῦτο δικασπόλος ἔτρεμεν ἀνήρ / σπερχομένοις δὲ πόδεσσιν ἐδύσατο πανδόκον αὐλήν (*and when the wise man, the judge, heard this, he started trembling, / and with hasty feet he entered the all-receiving court*), which renders the Johannine statement that Pilate panicked in an unusually succinct way.[534] Notwithstanding its concision, if we compare the Nonnian rendering with the Gospel verse (ὁ Πιλᾶτος), in Nonnus' account, Pilate's figure stands out as a "wise judge" (σοφὸς δικασπόλος) and the righteousness of his judgment is underlined by a term that appears as early as Homer to indicate the judge (both as a noun and as an adjective).[535] In the *Dionysiaca*, δικασπόλος is often associated with authoritative judges or deities. It is used twice of Cecrops in the mythical competition between Poseidon and Athena for the patronage of Athens,[536] once of Zeus, acting as judge of the contest between Dionysus' wine and Aristaeus' honey,[537] once of Athena as the goddess of justice[538] and once of Hermes, who administers justice.[539] The anxiety of the Roman governor is visually represented by the *hypallage* σπερχομένοις δὲ πόδεσσιν, which describes his haste in leaving.

The reluctance of Nonnus' Pilate to put Jesus to death also emerges in the way Nonnus treats the Johannine statement ἐκ τούτου ὁ Πιλᾶτος ἐζήτει ἀπολῦσαι αὐτόν (*from then on Pilate sought to release him*, 19.12), which is rendered as ἔνθεν ἐπικρίνων Πιλάτος μενέαινεν ἐᾶσαι / Ἰησοῦν ἀδίκαστον ἀνειμένον ἐκτὸς ὀλέθρου (*therefore, Pilate, judging Him again, desired to let / Jesus go without condemnation, free from doom*) in 19.53–54. The verb μενεαίνω is much stronger than the Gospel ἐζήτει. It is widely used in Homeric poetry, where it means "to desire eagerly" or "to strive for something"[540] and it is extensively employed in later epic poetry, and by Nonnus himself, with the same connotations of strong desire.[541] Moreover, the paraphrast inserts the participle ἐπικρίνων, which does not correspond to any phrase in the Gospel verse, so underlining once again the role of the Roman governor as a judge.

534 John 19.8 ὅτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλᾶτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη (*when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid*).

535 E.g. *Il.* 1.238, *Od.* 11.186.

536 *Dion.* 36.126 and 43.126.

537 *Dion.* 19.234 καὶ Κρονίδης ἐκάθητο δικασπόλος.

538 *Dion.* 41.275.

539 *Dion.* 41.171.

540 For instance, *Il.* 14.264; 16.491; 21.543; *Od.* 2.36 and 248; 13.30, *al.*

541 A few examples are enough: Ap. Rh 3.369; 4.1161, *al.*; Qu. Sm. 10.391; 12.567, *al.*; Nonn. *Dion.* 2.488 and 452; 4.180 *al.*

The two adjectives ἀδίκαστον ἀνειμένον, refering to Jesus and followed by the concise expression ἐκτὸς ὀλέθρου, which depicts Pilate's wish, emphasise the governor's unwillingness to condemn the prisoner. After the passage just discussed, i.e., in *Par.* 19.55–59, Nonnus resorts to the usual process of rhetorical *amplificatio* and does not add anything to the actual content. However, in rendering the aorist participle in the following Gospel verse (John 19.13) ὁ οὖν Πιλᾶτος *ἀκούσας*, he adds a significant psychological feature which does not occur in the Gospel, namely Pilate's fear and possibly panic: *καὶ* Πιλάτος *τρομεροῖσιν ἐν οὔασι* μῦθον *ἀκούων* (*and Pilate, hearing this word in his fearful ears*, *Par.* 19.60). The notion that after the Jews' menacing words "if you set him free you are not a friend of Caesar", the Roman governor is "trembling" is conveyed by the *hypallage* τρομεροῖσιν ἐν οὔασι. This phrase means "trembling with fear", but it does contain a substantial ambiguity, since it does not show whether Pilate is trembling because of the threatening crowd or because of his awareness of the impending crime. A similar ambiguity occurs at *Par.* 12.114–115 ἀκούων / αἰθερίην τρομεροῖσιν ἐν οὔασι λαίλαπα φωνῆς / λαός (*people … hearing / with their terrified ears that whirlwind of voice from the aether*), where the same *hypallage* refers to the reaction of the crowd listening to the thunderous voice speaking from heaven during Jesus' speech. In such a context, the phrase τρομεροῖσιν ἐν οὔασι, which can indicate both a feeling of fear and the idea of rumbling thunder, affirms Christ's authority and sovereignty.[542] Here, the same phrase implies that Pilate is far from being master of the situation and that he is aware of his powerlessness and guilt.

As the moment of Christ's condemnation approaches, a shift occurs within Nonnus' picture of Pilate's personality. When, seated on his throne, Pilate speaks again to the Jewish crowd, he is described as θρασυεργός (*Par.* 19.68 *καὶ* Πιλάτος θρασυεργὸς ἐπ' εὐλάιγγι θοώκῳ), a coinage by Nonnus, which appears only here and at *Dion.* 35.365. It has ambiguous connotations, as it may signify "bold", "brave" (as in the *Dionysiaca*), or "excessive", "arrogant", "insolent", as is probably the case in this context, where the adjective defining the governor's action (ἔργον) as θρασύ[543] anticipates his final decision. Pilate takes this decision at *Par.* 19.83, where ἑκὼν ἀέκων he will determine Jesus' fate.

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542 For an equivalent authority in Nonnus' pagan world, that is, the thunder of Zeus, cf. Maciver (2016), pp. 533–538.

543 The adjective θρασύς can have both positive (as in the case of Peter; see above, *G. Character Sketching: Between Theatricality, Exegesis and Ethopoea, 1. Peter*) or negative connotations, as happens here and in other instances where it is used of the Jews, high priests etc. See Preller (1918), pp. 145–146.

In the overall generally positive depiction of Pilate by Nonnus, a few negative features can be detected. For example, at *Par.* 19.45 Nonnus says καὶ Πιλάτος βαρύμηνιν ἀπερροίβδησεν ἰωήν (*and Pilate shrieked out a voice in heavy wrath*), which rephrases the plain and neutral Gospel λέγει οὖν (John 19.10). In this case the paraphrast stresses the point that Pilate is enraged by Christ's silence during his interrogation. This adjective illustrates the choleric side to his personality, highlighted by the *synecdoche* βαρύμηνιν ἰωήν, which is in turn strengthened by the verb ἀπορροιβδέω, "to shriek forth".[544] In the *Dionysiaca* the adjective βαρύμηνις[545] is often, albeit not exclusively, used to depict the anger of Dionysus' opponents[546] and it occurs only twice in the *Paraphrase*, the other instance being 7.88, where it describes the hostility of the crowds towards Jesus. As for Pilate's reaction, the adjective can have a milder sense, thus depicting Pilate as short-tempered, or, much worse, anticipating his imminent decision to put Christ to death.

A negative aspect of Pilate also emerges from *Par.* 19.49 καί οἱ Χριστὸς ἔλεξεν ἀγήνορα κόσμον ἐλέγχων (*and Christ told him, reproving the arrogant world*), which is an expansion of the Johannine statement ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς (19.11). The verb ἐλέγχω, meaning "to put to shame" or "to question" and referring to the aorist ἔλεξεν (corresponding to the Gospel ἀπεκρίθη), expands on the main verb by introducing a particularly unflattering implication. Nonnus states that Jesus is reproaching Pilate's "worldly arrogance" or perhaps, according to the correction of κόσμον to κόμπον, "arrogant attitude".[547] Ἀγήνορα[548] κόσμον

544 The verb is very rarely employed in Greek literature, although it occurs thirteen times in the Nonnian corpus: in the *Dionysiaca* it is always related to the voice and it indicates pain, menace, reproach or fury, which is consistent with Pilate's wrath. Apart from its use by Nonnus, it is employed by Sophocles (*Ant.* 1021) οὐδ' ὄρνις εὐσήμους ἀπορροιβδεῖ βοάς, / ἀνδροφθόρου βεβρῶτες αἵματος λίπος ("nor does any bird sound out clear signs in its shrill cries, for they have tasted the fatness of a slain man's blood"), and by Origen (*Contra Celsum* 8.71,17 Borret) ἀλλ' ἔοικε φλυαρίας ἐν τούτοις ἑξῆς συνάπτων καὶ τοῦτ' ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἀπερροιβδηκέναι ("But in the following words he seems to have put together senseless statements and to have yelled out things from his own mind").

545 Eighteen occurrences in the *Dionysiaca*. Perhaps it echoes Aesch. *Ag.* 1482 (δαίμονα καὶ βαρύμηνιν αἰνεῖς).

546 For instance, Deriades at 36.135; Pentheus at 44.94; Hera at 8.109, 9.69, 6.171 and 202, 30.200, *al.*

547 Iuvenis proposed the reading κόμπον (see Scheindler's critical apparatus). If this suggestion is correct, Jesus checks Pilate's arrogance (κόμπος); such an interpretation probably suits the context of the adjective better (cf. Preller, 1918, pp. 108–109).

548 As early as Homer the adjective is employed with positive connotations, in some passages, in the sense of "noble" (for instance *Il.* 2.276) and with negative implications, in the sense "headstrong" or "arrogant" in others (for instance, *Il.* 9.699, qualifying Achilles). The word

implies strong criticism of Pilate's vainglory, which is, as Agosti notes (2005, p. 390), one of the worst vices for a Christian. Pilate's arrogance is mentioned early on: at *Par.* 18.131 the governor's house[549] is described as δόμον αὐχήεντος ἡγεμονῆος, as happens again at *Par.* 19.163, which repeats 18.131 in a slight variation. The adjective αὐχήεις[550] actually corresponds to the ἀγήνωρ of *Par.* 19.49 and stresses Pilate's egoism and haughtiness.

In the final part of the Book 19, when Pilate gives Christ's body to Joseph of Arimathea, he is described as "rejoicing" (χαίρων, l. 197) to allow Joseph to take care of it. Does this allude to the possibility that Pilate feels relief at the opportunity to carry out a just action?

In conclusion, Nonnus' portrait of Pilate is generally positive, in so far as the Johannine narrative allows this. However, it does display a number of ambiguous features which suit the character of this controversial figure very well.[551] Thus Pilate is a complex character, since he undergoes some change. He moves from his initial intention to release Christ to his final condemnation of Jesus and his character combines diverse and contradictory features: adherence to justice, arrogance, audacity, fear, rage. These traits are both features of character and momentary impulses and feelings, thus making his *ethopoea* both ethical and pathetic.

Our examination of these four representative Nonnian characters demonstrate the plethora of means by which the poet sketches individuals in his effort to enhance the Johannine presentation of them in terms of interpretation of their motivation and in terms of dramatic and visually impressive depiction. Nonnus uses several modes of *ethopoea* (through words, lacking words, appearance) and adds actual comments on his characters' thoughts and reactions, to illuminate aspects of their personality which show them in a fuller way, in comparison to the Gospel, which leaves much to the reader's imagination.

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in these two senses also appears in Nonnus' poems (see Franchi 2013, pp. 420–421, and Agosti 2005, pp. 389–390).

549 Nonnus seems to be referring to Pilate's house rather than to the house of Herod; see Livrea (1989), p. 173.

550 Often used by Nonnus in the *Dionysiaca* for various deities and warriors (9.79, 13.545, 14.60, 20.75, *al.*), the adjective probably occurs first in Hellenistic times: in an epigram (Samius *AP* 6.114,3) it describes a wild bull and in a fragment of Rhianus (34 J.U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford 1925) is used of the Elinoi, a people of Thessaly or, according to Stephanus of Byzantium, of Thesprotia.

551 On Pilate in general, see A. Schiavone, *Ponzio Pilato* (Turin 2016). On Jesus' trial, see M. Miglietta, "Gesù e il suo processo nella prospettiva ebraica", *Athenaeum* 93 (2005), pp. 497–526.

However, rather than existing merely to complete Nonnus' powerful and colourful tableaux, such embellishment, as we might expect, typically makes use of the background of the Christian exegetical literature, which occasionally goes into considerable detail on the whys and the wherefores of the behaviour of the actors in the Gospel.

H Interpretatio

The procedure of *interpretatio* pertains to the process of paraphrastic amplification.[552] Resting on the practice of changing the language of a literary or sacred text without distorting its original sense, it contributes to the interpretation or clarification of the model.[553] In Nonnus' re-elaboration of the Gospel, *interpretatio* usually involves the use of verbal and adjectival accumulation, insertion of poetic language and rhetorical figures together with additions of ideas not directly springing from the model. The spirit of these additions is in accord with the fundamental exegetical function rooted in the tradition of hexametric poetry to which our poet belongs.[554] The role of the epic poet as a διδάσκαλος was universally recognised in the Greek culture, testified in numerous sources. For Herodotus, Homer and Hesiod are the figures who provided the Greeks with the knowledge of the divine world.[555] For Isocrates, Homer forms an educational reference point because of the patriotic implications of his poems.[556] Notwithstanding his reservations about poetry, Plato also acknowledges the role of Homer in the Greek *paideia*.[557] Strabo regards Homer as the earliest writer of geography.[558] In the Pseudo-Plutarchean *Vita Homeri*, Homer is explicitly said to be the primary source of inspiration for the art of painting.[559] In the light of ancient testimonies, as well as from internal evidence, it has been

552 See, indicatively, Roberts (1985), pp. 155–160.
553 The definition appears in *Rhet. Her*. 28, 38: *interpretatio est quae non iterans idem redintegrat verbum, sed id commutat quod positum est alio verbo quod idem valeat*. See also Lausberg (1998) s.v. (§ 343). This technique was practiced by Virgil and imitated by Biblical poets; see Roberts (1985), p. 155.
554 In the second prologue of the *Dionysiaca* Nonnus explicitly locates himself in the traditon of epic poetry: 25.8–9 τελέσας δὲ τύπον μιμηλὸν Ὁμήρου / ὕστατον ὑμνήσω πολέμων ἔτος.
555 Hdt. 2.53.
556 Isocr. *Pan*. 159.
557 Plato *Rep*. 606a.
558 At the beginning of his work, Strabo presents Homer as the first geographer: 1.1,2.
559 *Plutarchi de Homero 2* 2669–2670 εἰ δὲ καὶ ζῳγραφίας διδάσκαλον Ὅμηρον φαίη τις, οὐκ ἂν ἁμαρτάνοι.

argued that the function of archaic epic poetry may be assimilated to that of modern textbooks. In particular, the Homeric poems have been described as a "tribal encyclopaedia".[560]

In the wake of the epic tradition, represented by didactic poems such as the works of Aratus, Nicander and Oppian in Hellenistic and Imperial times, Nonnus could easily consider himself a διδάσκαλος, so becoming an exegete to the Fourth Gospel. It is above all through the channel of *interpretatio* that he can introduce into his poetic work the theological thought of the Christian Patristic tradition, with the aid of which he can reveal more lucidly and with clarification of a contemporary type the message of the Evangelist to the reader. Principally Cyril, along with several other Christian authors, such as Gregory of Nazianzus,[561] John Chrysostom and Epiphanius of Salamis, who was a renowned theologian in his time,[562] seem to be among Nonnus' sources. In other words, the process of re-elaboration of the model enables the poet to present himself as the herald of the Gospel message. In doing so, he has to resort to the Christian exegetical tradition, albeit amalgamating it with his background in the Classics. It is especially in the paraphrast's interpretation of the purely theological aspects of the Johannine text that the influence of Christian sources becomes most evident and significant.

Examples of exegetical *interpretatio* appear below, in selected Nonnian passages in which the Gospel diction is enriched with ideas elaborated at the Ecumenical Councils and other later sources and traditions. Nonnus adds new perspectives to the content of the Gospel, elucidating it from the point of view of theology and dogma. We will examine here how Nonnus incorporates in the *Paraphrase* crucial ideas drawn mainly from Mariological and Christological teaching. The passages discussed are divided into three sub-chapters, according to the theological notions they deal with. The first sub-chapter covers specific features of Mary, Jesus and the Passion, occasionally expanding to the disciples (John the Apostle, Peter). Our discussion will stress the virginity of Mary, which is connected with that of John the Apostle, Mary's title Θεοτόκος and certain attributes and qualities of Christ and Christ's role: the repeated reference to Jesus as a stranger in the world, God's perfect love, expressed through the concept that Jesus' life is a ransom for humanity, and the ambiguous term πασιμέλουσα attributed to the wounded side of the crucified Christ. We will also

560 E.A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA, and London 1963), pp. 61–86 *passim*, 92 and 152. See also Malsbary (1985), pp. 57–58.

561 See also above, General Introduction, *D. The Paraphrase*, end of section.

562 For Epiphanius' celebrity in the Christian world of the fourth century and afterwards, see further Jacobs (2016), pp. 40–62.

look at details of the Crucifixion and the connection between Christ and Peter through their manner of death, since the Passion and its description is the dramatic apex of the poem and encompasses cardinal Christian ideas.

Our discussion continues with the second sub-chapter, an overview of a number of main issues of Nonnus' Trinitarian theology. A central theme in this theology of important dogmatic matters is the relation among the persons of the Trinity. In this context, we will discuss particular terms which stress the closeness and equality of honour between the Persons, such as ἀγχίθρονος, ἀμέριστος, ὁμόζυγος and σύννομος. In the third sub-chapter we discuss two crucial abstract concepts, freedom and joy. These relate both to believers (eternity of joy, freedom of choice) and to Christ (Christ's own freedom). Joy and freedom thus become Christian conditions / values, which lessen the distance between the human and the divine, since they are shared by humans and the divine and show that humans are destined to partake in divine bliss.

H.1 *Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion*

H.1.a The Virginity of Mary and John the Apostle. Mary Θεοτόκος

Par. 7.8–10	John 7.3
ἀγχίμολοι δὲ γνωτοὶ ψευδαλέοι τετράζυγες υἷες Ἰωσὴφ Χριστὸν ἐπισπέρχοντες ὁμόθροον ἴαχον αὐδήν	εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ
coming near, Christ's false brothers, the four-yoked sons of Joseph, urged Him on, crying out a common voice	so his brothers said to him

From the end of the third century onwards, the interest in Mary as Virgin increased and was associated with Christological doctrine.[563] Nonnus makes it clear that οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ were actually Joseph's sons, rather than Jesus' real brothers, so that no confusion might occur as to the virginity of Christ's mother. In a similar spirit, in *Par.* 1.182–183 Nonnus says Ἰησοῦν ὁσίοιο βοώμενον υἱὸν Ἰωσήφ, / Ναζαρὲθ ναετῆρα, θεοῦ γόνον to render John's Ἰησοῦν υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσὴφ τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ (1. 45). Jesus' "brothers" are presented by John again as ἀδελ-

563 See further Cameron (1991), pp. 165–175.

φοί (2.12 and 7.5) and Nonnus uses the nouns γνωτοί and ἀδελφειοί, "relatives", at *Par.* 2.65 and 7.21 respectively. Associating *Par.* 1.182–183 with *Par.* 7.9, De Stefani (2002, p. 99) notes that *Par.* 7.9 probably echoes Luke 3.23 ὢν υἱός, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, Ἰωσὴφ τοῦ Ἠλί.[564] Some heretics, such as Cerinthians, went so far as to hold that Jesus was the son of Mary and Joseph.[565] Christ's virginal conception was also denied by Arians.[566] Another issue was the perpetual virginity of Mary, since Christ's virgin conception itself was more rarely denied. In the first / second century, Tertullian accepted the virgin conception of Christ but denied that virginity was preserved during and after the birth of Jesus[567] and seemed to imply that Christ had blood brothers.[568] Much later, in c. 383, Helvidius rejected Mary's perpetual virginity, only to have his ideas refuted by St. Jerome in Latin.[569] Rejection of Mary's perpetual virginity was also expressed by Bonosus (Bishop of Sardica), as we learn from St. Ambrose of Milan.[570] In Greek, defending Mary's virginity against a heresy in Arabia,[571] Epiphanius refuted the teaching of those whom he calls Ἀντιδικομαριαμίτας, who claimed that Mary and Joseph consummated their marriage after the birth of Jesus.[572] Cyril vigor-

564 For a review of scholarship on "Jesus' brothers" in John and a discussion of the topic, see also Livrea (2000), pp. 244–254, who elaborates on the use of "brother" in a wider sense (relatives but also followers).

565 Cf. Iren. *Adv. Haer.* 1.21 Harvey (W.W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei episcopi Lugdunensis libri* quinque adversus haereses, Cambridge 1857), Theodoretus *Haer. Fab. Comp.* PG 88.489,1–6. On Cerinthus, cf. also Hippolytus *Ref. omn. haer.* 7.33 Marcovich (M. Marcovich, *Hippolytus*, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, Berlin, New York 1986), Epiph. *Pan.* 1.351,9–12 Holl. Eusebius reports that the Ebionites, too, regarded Christ as the son of Joseph and Mary: *Hist. Eccl.* 5.8,10 Bardy. Cf. Schnackenburg (1968 [vol. 1]), p. 170.

566 See Cyril *De Rect. Fid. ad Reg.* PG 1213 D. See also Du Manoir de Juaye (1944), pp. 169–170.

567 *De Carne Christi* 23.

568 *Adv. Marc.* 4.19 *non potuisse illi annuntiari quod mater et fratres eius foris starent quaerentes videre eum, si nulla illi mater et fratres nulli fuissent* (*there could have been no report brought to him that his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to see him, if he had had no mother or brethren*; ed. and tr. E. Evans, *Tertullian: Adversus Marcionem*, Oxford 1972).

569 Helvidius relies on Tertullian for his views (Jerome, *Adv. Helv.* 19). See also Liebeschuetz (2005), p. 293. An early discussion of these views, to which Nonnus is opposed, is Preller (1918), pp. 8–9.

570 *Ep.* 71. See Liebeschuetz (2005), pp. 336–337.

571 See Jacobs (2016), p. 41.

572 Epiph. *Pan.* 3.452,9–15 Holl Ἀντιδικομαριαμιτῶν γάρ τινες, ὥσπερ ἐχθρίαν πρὸς τὴν παρθένον ἔχοντες καὶ βουλόμενοι κατευτελίζειν ἐκείνης τὸ κλέος, φθόνῳ τινὶ ἀρθέντες ἢ σφάλματι καὶ χρᾶναι βουλόμενοι διανοίας ἀνθρώπων, ἐτόλμησαν λέγειν τὴν ἁγίαν Μαρίαν μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ γέννησιν ἀνδρὶ συνῆφθαι, φημὶ δὲ αὐτῷ τῷ Ἰωσήφ. Φασὶ δέ, ὡς ἄνω μοι εἴρηται, ὅτι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ πρεσβύτου Ἀπολιναρίου ἐξήχηται ὁ λόγος ἢ ἀπό τινων τῶν αὐτῷ μεμαθητευμένων (*as though they had a grudge against the Virgin and desired to cheapen her reputation, certain Antidicomarians, inspired by some envy or error and intending to sully men's minds, have dared*

ously defended the perpetual virginity of Mary (before birth, during birth, after birth), explicitly denying the possibility that she might have had other children after Jesus.[573]

Commenting on the present passage of John, Cyril (*Jo.* 1.582,27 Pusey) glosses the term ἀδελφοί with the explanatory phrase οἱ νομισθέντες τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἀδελφοί (*the reputed brothers of the Saviour*). These were Jacob, Simon, Josse and Juda (Mat. 13.55). Here, in our passage, Nonnus omits their names and only reports their number. In calling them "sons of Joseph", Nonnus follows the tradition according to which Jesus' "brothers" were sons of Joseph from a previous wife. This idea appears in the *Protevangelium of James*[574] and later in Epiphanius[575] and Cyril.[576] In his *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen refers specifically to the Gospel of James and to that of Peter as the sources of the tradition about the sons of Joseph and a previous wife.[577]

The virginity of Mary is stressed also in Books 2 and 19 with terms absent in John and added by Nonnus. In *Par.* 2.9–11 Jesus' mother, who is presented in terms attributed to the virgin goddesses in the *Dionysiaca*,[578] is παρθενικὴ Χριστοῖο θεητόκος, who is *touching with her undefiled palm the wedding table* (ἀχράντῳ παλάμῃ γαμίης ψαύουσα τραπέζης) and, although she has a child, is a lover of virginity: παιδοτόκος φυγόδεμνος, ἀεὶ μεθέπουσα κορείην (*a child-bearer in flight from the marriage bed, always possessing maidenhood*). In *Par.* 2.65–66 Nonnus has αὐτογόνῳ δέ / παρθένος ὡμάρτησε θεητόκος υἱέι μήτηρ (*by the self-begotten / Son the virgin mother walked, the mother of God*).

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to say that St. Mary had relations with a man after Christ's birth, I mean with Joseph himself. And as I have already mentioned, it is said that the claim has been made by the venerable Apollinarius himself, or some of his disciples; tr. F. Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III. De Fide*, Leiden 2013, p. 616). Cf. ibid. 1.161,12–14 Holl. An early discussion of the subject is Preller (1918), pp. 8–15. See further Tavard (1996), pp. 60–61, and Schaff (1931), p. 119.

573 *De Recta Fide ad Reginas* PG 76.1317 C (= ACO 1.1,5,111,15 Schwartz) ἕνα καὶ μόνον ἔτεκεν Υἱὸν τὸν Ἐμμανουὴλ ἡ ἁγία Παρθένος, further explaining the term πρωτότοκος in Luke (2.7) as referring to God's only Son, who, having acquired flesh, became humans' eldest brother. See further Du Manoir de Juaye (1944), pp. 269–278, and esp. p. 275. See also Livrea (2000), p. 246, on *Par.* 2.66.

574 19.12–14 καὶ ἀντιεῖπεν ὁ Ἰωσὴφ λέγων· υἱοὺς ἔχω καὶ πρεσβύτης εἰμί.

575 *Pan.* 1.320,28–320,1 Holl Ἰακώβῳ φημὶ καὶ Ἰωσῇ καὶ Ἰούδᾳ καὶ Συμεῶνι υἱοῖς οὖσι τοῦ Ἰωσὴφ ἀπὸ ἄλλης γυναικός. Cf. also ibid. 3.44,6–10 Holl.

576 Ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῷ υἱοὶ καὶ θυγατέρες ἐκ πρώτων γάμων, PG 69.352 C.

577 10.17,15 Girod. See the discussion of Young (1997), p. 90.

578 Kuiper (1918, p. 248, n. 4), commenting on *Dion.* 27.144 παρθενικὴ φυγόδεμνος … Παλλάς, 47.417 ὤμοσεν ἀχράντοιο γαμήλιον ὅρκον Ἀθήνης. See also Tissoni (1998), p. 189 (on *Dion.* 44.312 θεὰ φυγόδεμνος, on Artemis), citing more examples from the *Dionysiaca*, Shorrock (2011), pp. 62–63, and Franchi (2012b), pp. 139–147.

In Book 19, Christ from the Cross entrusts the Virgin Mary to the "Beloved Disciple". Ancient tradition identified this disciple as John the Apostle. For instance, Cyril makes this clear in his commentary on this section of John.[579] Below we will show that writings included in the Acts of the Council, Epiphanius' *Panarion* and [Cyril's] *Encomium* to Mary (or material echoed in it, depending on the date of the composition of the *Encomium*) offer important background for the comprehension and appreciation of the Nonnian rephrasing of John 19.26–27.

***Par.* 19.134–135 and 137–145**	**John 19.26–27**
ἐγγύθι δὲ σταυροῖο συνήλυδες ἦσαν ἑταῖροι καὶ Μαρίη, Χριστοῖο θεητόκος· (…) (…) ὡς δὲ τεκοῦσαν Χριστὸς ἴδεν θεόπαιδα καὶ ὃν φιλέεσκε μαθητήν μητέρι μῦθον ἔλεξε· γύναι φιλοπάρθενε μῆτερ, ἠνίδε παρθένον υἷα. Καὶ ἔμπαλιν εἶπε μαθητῇ· ἠνίδε παρθενική, φιλοπάρθενε, σεῖο τεκοῦσα νόσφι τόκου. Κείνης δὲ μετὰ δρόμον εὔποδος ὥρης παρθένον εὐώδινα συνέστιον ἔσχε μαθητής ἔνδον ἑοῦ μεγάροιο· καὶ ἄσπορος ἔσκε τεκούσης υἱός, ἀνὴρ ἀλόχευτος ἀπειρώδινος ἀνάσσης.	Ἰησοῦς οὖν ἰδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν ὃν ἠγάπα, λέγει τῇ μητρί· γύναι, ἴδε ὁ υἱός σου. Εἶτα λέγει τῷ μαθητῇ· ἴδε ἡ μήτηρ σου. Καὶ ἀπ’ ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἔλαβεν αὐτὴν ὁ μαθητὴς εἰς τὰ ἴδια.
But close to the cross the companions had come together, as well as Mary, Christ's mother, the mother of God; (…) As soon as Christ saw His mother, the one who bore God, and the disciple He loved, He spoke this word to His mother: "Woman, mother who loves virginity,	When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son"! Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother"! And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

579 *Jo.* 3.91,23–24 Pusey παραδίδωσι δὲ τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ μαθητῇ, Ἰωάννης δὲ οὗτος ἦν ὁ τοῦ βιβλίου συγγραφεύς (*he commits her to the beloved disciple—John, the author of the book*). Other suggestions have been put forward. For instance, identification with Lazarus (Tavard 1996, p. 14). For a discussion of the possible identifications and a review of literature on the problem, see Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), Excursus 18, "The Disciple whom Jesus Loved", Barrett (1978), pp. 116–119, Culpepper (1994), pp. 72–82, Ridderbos (1997), pp. 1–2, 83–84, 387, 471–472, 659.

(*cont.*)

Par. 19.134–135 and 137–145	John 19.26–27
behold your virgin son". And to the opposite direction He said to the disciple: "O lover of virginity, behold the virgin who bore you without childbirth". After the course of that fleet-footed hour, the disciple shared the same hearth as the fruitful virgin inside his own home; and he became the unsown son of the mother, the man unborn of the queen who knew not the pangs of childbirth.	

Here the Virgin is called θεητόκος. As has been pointed out,[580] Nonnus is using the title of the Virgin that was confirmed by the Council of Ephesus (431), although the term was used earlier, too.[581] The Council of Ephesus was convened because of the controversy between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius. Nestorius, who discerned two οὐσίαι, one human and one divine, in Jesus, preached that Mary should be called Χριστοτόκος because she was the mother of the human nature.[582] Cyril insisted on the term Θεοτόκος, stressing the unity of the human and the divine nature in Christ.[583]

580 For instance, Preller (1918), p. 7, Livrea (2000), on *Par.* 2.9, Shorrock (2011), p. 61.

581 See above, *1. Introduction, B. Dates and chronology* with n. 35.

582 Nestorius held that Mary should be called ἀνθρωποτόκος and χριστοτόκος, because she gave birth to a man who was later unified with the divine. See further Franchi (2012b), pp. 136–137.

583 The idea of the unity of the natures of Christ is central in Cyril's Christology. See Koen (1991), esp. pp. 63–64 and pp. 79–80, Keating (2009), pp. 85–87, Franchi (2012), p. 137. A representative passage is *Jo.* 1.224,14–23 Pusey: τοῦ δὲ Θεοῦ Λόγου καταβεβηκότος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καταβῆναί φησι, διχάζεσθαι μετὰ τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν εἰς δύο πρόσωπα παραιτούμενος καὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπων τισὶν ἕτερον μὲν εἶναι λέγειν υἱὸν τὸν ἐκ παρθένου διὰ τὴν χρείαν ληφθέντα ναὸν ἕτερον δὲ πάλιν τὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς πεφηνότα Λόγον, πλὴν ὅσον εἰς τὸν ἑκάστῳ πρέποντα κατὰ φύσιν διορισμόν. Ὥσπερ γάρ ἐστιν ἐκ Θεοῦ Λόγος, οὕτω καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γυναικὸς εἷς δὲ λοιπὸν ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ὁ Χριστός, ἀδιαίρετος εἰς υἱότητα καὶ εἰς δόξαν θεοπρεπῆ (*even though God the Word has descended from heaven, he says that the Son of Man descended, refusing, after he became human, to be divided into two persons. He does not allow certain people to say that the temple taken from the virgin because of our need is one son and the Word who appeared from the Father is another, except insofar as there is a distinction between what is appropriate to each one by nature. Just as the Word is from God, so also the man is from the woman; but ultimately Christ is one from both, indivisible in sonship and God-befitting glory*). For a summary of Nestorius' teaching, Cyril's reaction and the subsequent

Some have argued that Nonnus, although inspired by Cyril's commentary on John, avoids involvement in the controversy between Nestorius and Cyril.[584] However, Nonnus' account of the Virgin does contain overtones reminiscent of this controversy and its parameters. Here (*Par.* 19.135) and at *Par.* 2.9, Nonnus speaks of the Virgin as Μαρίη, Χριστοῖο θεητόκος, a phrasing which has attracted critics' interest. Grillmeier and Hainthaler remark that it "creates a certain distance from any current controversy on the significance of the Nestorian strife" and wonder "or is the Nestorian 'Christotokos' thus corrected?".[585] The phrase has also been thought to mean the opposite, too, being "uncomfortably close (in doctrinal terms) to the discredited epithet Χριστοτόκος".[586] It has also been regarded as an oxymoron, whose aim is to neutralise "the definitude commonly attributed to dogmatic concepts",[587] or as an ambiguous position which deliberately leaves the matter open and invites readers from all backgrounds (Orthodox, Origenist, Nestorian) to give it their own interpretation.[588]

All that having been said, it can be also argued that the phrase is in fact congruent with Cyril's position. Although Cyril typically insists on the title Θεοτόκος alone, he also stresses the coexistence of the humanity and the divinity of Christ. This idea is often expressed. It is interestingly summed up in the phrase ἡ ἁγία παρθένος χριστοτόκος τε ὁμοῦ καὶ θεοτόκος νοεῖταί τε καὶ λέγεται ("the holy Virgin is understood as and called both Christotokos and Theotokos") in Cyril's *Letter To the Monks of Egypt* (ACO 1.1,1,15,2–3 Schwartz), probably written in February 429.[589] This letter marks the beginning of the culmination of the controversy between Cyril and Nestorius.[590] In the crucial part of the letter, Cyril makes the distinction between other women, who were mothers of

events, see, for instance, Maraval (1997), pp. 355–362, Russell (2000), pp. 33–39, Keating (2009), p. 88, Van Loon (2009), p. 8. An early detailed account is Jugie (1912), pp. 29–55.

584 Grillmeier and Hainthaler (1996), p. 99.

585 Grillmeier and Hainthaler (1996), p. 97, n. 40.

586 Shorrock (2011), pp. 61–62.

587 As Sieber (2017, p. 159), puts it.

588 Hadjittofi (2018), pp. 182–183.

589 Jugie (1912), p. 34, Van Loon (2009), p. 303. Russell (2000, p. 36) comments that at the time when the letter was written, "the disturbance was no longer a domestic matter but had already assumed international proportions". McKinion (2000, p. 133) remarks that the monks would have anyway been too simple to have reflected on so subtle a matter as the difference between Χριστοτόκος and Θεοτόκος. On the other hand, Wessel (2004, p. 76) believes that the monks were actually interested in the issue and considering what the appropriate appellation of the Virgin was.

590 Jugie (1912), p. 35, McKinion (2000), pp. 12–13, Keating (2009), p. 88, Van Loon (2009), p. 8.

people anointed with the Holy Spirit, and could be thus called χριστοτόκοι, and the Virgin, who is the only mother who can be called both χριστοτόκος and θεοτόκος, Emmanuel being the only Christ who is truly God.[591] In a similar spirit, Nonnus juxtaposes and intertwines the ideas "Christ" and "God". This he does by means of the closest possible syntactical interdependence of the two terms, realised through the involvement of the idea of motherhood to which the two terms refer and which creates the human bond between them. He is careful to connect the idea of birth (-τοκ) with Θεός and give it an objectival genitive (Χριστός), by means of which he identifies this christ, i.e. the Christ, Χριστός,[592] with Θεός and thus emphasises the unity of Jesus' two natures.

A text that displays similarities with our passage of Nonnus, as we suggest, is the *Encomium* to Mary, attributed to Cyril. It has been argued that the *Encomium* was actually written after Cyril's death (444), and echoes his ideas.[593] Ehrhard placed its date between the seventh and the ninth century, on the grounds of its stylistic similarities to works of the period.[594] If Ehrhard is correct, the author of the work completely assumes the role of Cyril, who he pretends to be, in that in the preface and elsewhere he refers to his controversy with Nestorius and to his satisfaction at the outcome of the Council in which heresy was condemned.[595] If this late dating is correct, the resemblance between certain patterns in *Par.* 19.134–145 and this treatise either is coincidental or perhaps suggests that there was a common text on which both writers were drawing.

To return to the motif of virginity: in Jesus' speech in Nonnus in Book 19, every reference to Mary is accompanied by a term designating virginity (φιλο-

591 See Van Loon (2009), p. 304. Cf. also McKinion (2000), pp. 134–137, Wessel (2004), p. 277.

592 With reference to *Par.* 18.126 οὐ σὺ πέλεις Χριστοῖο διάκτορος; (*you are not a servant of Christ?*) a part of Nonnus' rephrasing of the servant's question to Peter during Jesus' arrest, Floyd (2003, p. 253) observes that Χριστός, which means "Anointed One, Messiah", is used by Nonnus in a way parallel to the Homeric "Phoebus Apollo", even in instances in which it is not appropriate in the context. As far as Χριστοῖο θεητόκος is concerned, however, the Nestorian controversy can be indeed echoed in the use of "Christ" and it can be maintained that theological discussion does encounter Homeric-styled formularity in this construction.

593 See Du Manoir de Juaye (1944), p. 282, with n. 2. See also next note.

594 A. Ehrhard, "Eine unechte Marienhomilile des hl. Cyrill von Alexandrien", *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und kirchengeschichte* 3 (1889), pp. 97–113. For the dating, see pp. 111–112. The author argued for the influence of Cyril's Fourth Ephesian Homily (ACO 1.1,2,102,13–1.1,2,104,30 Schwartz) on the *Encomium*. See also Wessel (2004), p. 233, n. 159.

595 *Enc. in S. Mar. Deip.* PG 77.1029, 1032.

πάρθενε, παρθενική, παρθένον). Φιλοπάρθενος, in particular, designates Mary's conscious and deliberate adherence to chastity and gives her an active role in the formation of her condition.[596] The doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity is mentioned, together with her title Θεοτόκος, by [Cyril] in the *Encomium*: PG 77.1032,36 (Θεοτόκον and Ἀειπάρθενον). Most importantly, Mary's title θεοτόκος is often mentioned together with the adjective παρθένος in Cyril's defence of the use of this title against Nestorius (for instance, in his *Letter to the Monks of Egypt*,[597] in his *First*,[598] *Second*[599] and *Third Letter to Nestorius*,[600] in the letter *To a Devotee of Nestorius*,[601] in the letter *To the Clergy and the People of Constantinople*[602]). Like Cyril, Nonnus persistently juxtaposes the idea of Mary's motherhood of the Gospel (μήτηρ) to the added idea of her virginity in the *Paraphrase*, thus emphasising the paradox of Jesus' birth. But above all, the emphatic reference to the virginity of Christ's mother is particularly suitable for this specific Gospel passage. Jesus' entrusting of Mary to John the Apostle in this Johannine section was actually used as an argument against doubting her virginity, such doubt being created by the reference to Christ's brothers (cf. John 7.3, discussed above) and other Gospel passages.[603] Epiphanius says (*Pan.* 1.319,26–28 Holl) that if Jesus' "brothers" were Mary's children, Jesus would have

596 Passages which refer to Mary's conscious choice of virginity are Theodotus *In Dom. nostri Jes. Chr. diem nat.* (M. Aubineau, "Une homélie de Théodote d'Ancyre sur la nativité du Seigneur", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 26 [1960], 224–232) 4.18–19, [Athan.] *Sermo de descr. deip.* PG 28.952,21–25, [Greg. Nyss.] *In Annunciationem* (D. Montagna, *Marianum* 24 [1962], 536–539), pp. 43–44.

597 For instance, ACO 1.1,1,11, 12 Schwartz. Translation of the Letter in McGuckin (1994), pp. 245–261.

598 ACO 1.1,1,24 Schwartz, Alberigo et al. (2006), p. 87. For the *Letter*, see Van Loon (2009), pp. 323–323.

599 ACO 1.1,1,28 Schwartz, Alberigo et al. (2006), p. 91. For the *Letter*, canonised in the Councils of Ephesus and, later, Chalcedon and propably written in February 430, see Van Loon (2009), pp. 326–334. Translation of the Letter in McGuckin (1994), pp. 262–265).

600 In particular, in the first anathema in the letter: εἴ τις οὐχ ὁμολογεῖ θεὸν εἶναι κατὰ ἀλήθειαν τὸν Ἐμμανουὴλ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο θεοτόκον τὴν ἁγίαν παρθένον (γεγέννηκε γὰρ σαρκικῶς σάρκα γεγονότα τὸν ἐκ θεοῦ λόγον), ἀνάθεμα ἔστω (ACO 1.1,1,40 Schwartz, Alberigo et al. 2006, p. 103). For the *Letter*, see Van Loon (2009), pp. 479–494. Translation of the Letter in McGuckin (1994), pp. 266–275. For ἀνάθεμα ἔστω as an expression which designates expulsion from the Church, see Tosi (1991), pp. 1006–1007 (n. 2036).

601 ACO 1.1,1,109 Schwartz (in the last emphatic sentence of the letter). For the letter, see Van Loon (2009), p. 320.

602 ACO 1.1,1,114 Schwartz. For the letter, see Van Loon (2009), p. 496.

603 Such as Mat. 1.18 μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου (*when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit*).

chosen them as her protectors. Commenting on John, Origen had expressed similar thoughts earlier (*Jo.* 1.4,23 Blanc). For the same point made by a Latin Father, cf. Ambrose, *Ep.* 71.[604]

Interestingly, Nonnus also calls Mary θεόπαιδα (*Par.* 19.137), an adjective often applied to her in later literature. One of the earliest applications of the term to Mary occurs before Nonnus, at Physiologus 5.32 (together with θεοτόκος) and, later, at *Cat. in Jo.* 393,17. The adjective probably means "she whose child is divine", rather than "she who is born form God"[605] and thus actually repeats the θεητόκος of l. 135.[606] The poet also qualifies Mary with the adjective ἀπειρώδιν (*Par.* 19.145), a term which deserves special attention. Given the ambiguous phrasing, the adjective here may refer either to Mary's situation as regards John, who is ἀνὴρ ἀλόχευτος, the genitive ἀπειρώδινος ἀνάσσης depending, syntactically speaking, on this nominative, because from now on he will be Mary's son, without being literally so, or it may refer to Mary's situation as regards Jesus, her real son. If it refers to her relation to John, it means that she has not given birth to him, her "new", not real son, which is an obvious reality. If the adjective refers to her situation as regards her giving birth to Jesus, the adjective becomes more interesting and meaningful. This interpretation is more probable than the other,[607] as it makes an important Mariological point.

Ἀπειρώδιν has been regarded as equal to ἄφθαρτος, "incorrupt", rather than "*partus dolores non experta*",[608] because Mary *has* actually given birth. However, the adjective can be taken even more literally than merely indicating the experience (or the absence of the experience) of giving birth. Its literal sense is "she who has not experienced birth-pangs" and this is indeed appropriate for the Virgin. This does not contradict εὐώδιν of *Par.* 19.143, as this adjective means "of happy birth" and may signify the excellence of the Virgin's Son or even the ease with which she gave birth.[609] The statement that Mary gave birth to Christ painlessly, a paradox consistent with the paradox of her giving birth and remaining a virgin, occurs in certain Patristic texts. Among fourth century

604 For Ambrose's defence of Mary's perpetual virginity, see Liebeschuetz (2005), pp. 56–57.

605 Preller (1918), p. 8, Accorinti (1987), ad loc. In a similar way, Semele is called θεόπαις at Nonn. *Dion.* 18.19.

606 As Golega (1930, p. 107) observed.

607 This is also the conclusion of Preller (1918), p. 11.

608 Preller (1918), pp. 9–10, followed by Accorinti (1987), ad loc., and De Stefani (2002), p. 206. The adjective qualifies also Athena in Nonnus (*Dion.* 16.152, 27.110), as has been observed early on (Nansius 1593, p. 49).

609 See LSJ s.v. At *Par.* 1.155 it qualifies the sea (εὐώδινος ... θαλάσσης) and it may be interpreted as "fecund". See De Stefani (2002) ad loc. (p. 206).

authors, the idea appears in Ephraem[610] and Epiphanius in his *Panarion*.[611] For Proclus of Constantinople, Mary's giving birth painlessly expunges the sorrows of Eve, who was told by God that she will give birth in pain at *Gen.* 3.16.[612] The idea that Mary's labour was painless was adopted in the Penthecte Synod, the Council in Trullo (692).[613] Ἀπειρώδιν occurs only once in the *Paraphrase*, in this passage, and the question then arises as to why it occurs in the account of the Crucifixion. The word appears here for two reasons. First, it stresses Mary's virginity, which is extensively developed in this Nonnian passage, because the exceptionality of the absence of pangs is insolubly linked to Christ's divine origin and miraculous birth.[614] Second, it creates a link between the birth of Jesus and the end of His human life, described here, as regards His mother's involvement in the two situations through the presence or absence of pain. It recalls the prophecy that Symeon offered when Joseph and Mary presented the baby Jesus to him (Luke 2.35 καὶ σοῦ [δὲ] αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ῥομφαία, *and a sword will pierce through your own soul also*), which stressed the contrast between the birth of Jesus then, which did not cause Mary any physical pain, and His death now, which inflicts pain on her, as Symeon had foretold.[615]

Of particular interest is Nonnus' reference to the virginity of John (*Par.* 19.140 and 141). The tradition of John's virginity, widely spread from late fourth century onwards, starts with *Acta Ioannis* (an apocryphal text composed in the second half of the second century), 113: ὁ κἀμὲ φυλάξας μέχρι τῆς ἄρτι ὥρας καθαρὸν ἑαυτῷ καὶ ἀμιγῆ μείξεως γυναικός, κτλ.[616] It has been suggested that it may be exactly in this section in the Gospel (John 19.26–27), among other passages, most of them also Johannine, that refer to Christ's special affection for John that the

610 *Serm. Adv. Haer.* 146,6 Phrantzoles.

611 1.360,14–15 Holl.

612 Proclus, *Hom. de dogmate incarnationis* 14. See also Maguire (2011), pp. 205–206. For the opposition between Eve and Mary as regards birth-giving, see also Franchi (2012b), pp. 157–158.

613 In its seventy-ninth canon. For this and for the response of Byzantine art to the concept of Mary's painless birth, see Maguire (2011), pp. 205–212.

614 Byzantine commentaries on the seventy-ninth canon of the Council in Trullo emphasise this idea. See Maguire (2011), pp. 206–207.

615 That Symeon's prophecy refers to the sorrow of Mary as she will witness the Crucifixion occurs in several patristic accounts. For instance, Cyril *In. Luc.* (PG 77.1049,25–30), Origen *Hom. In Luc.* 17.105 Rauer (M. Rauer, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 9, Berlin 1959[2]). Jesus' birth and the Crucifixion from the point of view of Mary's reaction to them are also probably connected in iconography. In representations of the Nativity in Byzantine art there are signs of pain on the Virgin's face, interpreted as "proleptic" expressions of her future suffering (see Maguire 2011, pp. 209–210).

616 Junod (1987), pp. 113–115. See also Schnackenburg (1968 [vol. 1]), p. 85.

tradition of John's virginity originates.[617] John Chrysostom, among others,[618] also refers to John as virgin (*De Virg*. 82.5–7 Grillet-Musurillo).[619] Jesus' choice of John, among other disciples, as the one with whom Mary would live from that moment onwards, is explained by Epiphanius as being due to John's virginity alone.[620] In his *Encomium* of Mary (*Enc. in S. Mar. Deip*. PG 77.1032,36–37), [Cyril] justifies similarly Christ's entrusting of Mary to John: τὴν Θεοτόκον καὶ Ἀειπάρθενον ὡς παρθένῳ παρέδωκεν ("he gave the Theotokos and ever-virgin [to him] because he was a virgin").

Aware, as he certainly was, of the tradition that associated John 19.26–27 with the Evangelist's virginity, Nonnus elaborates on the notion of both Mary's and John's chastity. He adds, first, to the *Vorlage* recurrent terms that designate the virginity of both Mary and John and then employs phrases which play on the idea that John is the supposed son of Mary, although not actually born to her: σεῖο τεκοῦσα / νόσφι τόκου, ἄσπορος ἔσκε τεκούσης / υἱός, ἀνὴρ ἀλόχευτος. The insistence on this contradiction recalls the paradox contained in the idea of Jesus' birth from a virgin mother, and thus draws John and Christ closer to each other, by placing them in parallel. Very characteristic of this, in the process of the parallelism of Jesus and John, is the use of the adjective ἄσπορος, "without seed", to qualify υἱός describing John as the "son" of Mary. Defenders of Mary's title of Θεοτόκος above all use this adjective to describe the conception of Christ by Mary.[621] Moreover, one of the occurrences of ἄσπορος in regard to the con-

617 Another passage thought to be responsible for the tradition is *Revelation* 14.4 (on the 144.000 chaste men); see Culpepper (1994), p. 179, n. 10. Apart from the *Acta Ioannis*, the earliest source on John's ἁγνεία explicitly associates it with the fact that John was Christ's Beloved Disciple (John 13.23. 19.26, 20.2, 21.20): Ps.-Clemens *De Virg*. 1.6,3 (mentioning examples of virginity) καὶ ὡς Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐπιστήθιος τοῦ κυρίου, ὃν καὶ ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὡς ἁγνόν. Ps.-Clemens accounts for Christ's love for John on the basis of John's virginity. Other early sources are apocryphal literature; see Junod (1987), pp. 116–118, 129. For Junod (1987, pp. 129–132), the Johannine passage in which the tradition actually originates is John 13.23–25 (repeated in 21.20), where John throws himself onto Christ's lap, rather than the other passages, including John 19.26–27.

618 For instance, Ephraem, Jerome, Augustine: see further Junod (1987), pp. 118–129.

619 B. Grillet, H. Musurillo, *Jean Chrysostome. La virginité* (Sources chrétiennes 125, Paris 1966).

620 *Panarion* 3.461,13–16 Holl. See also Franchi (2012b), pp. 160–161. For the other two references of Epiphanius to John's παρθενία (2.362,10–11, 3.479,34–480,1 Holl; the latter indirect), see Junod (1987), pp. 121–122.

621 Indicatively: homily of Proclus of Constantinople, ACO 1.1,1,104,1 Schwartz ὁ τοῦ γένους λυτρωτὴς Χριστὸς ἀσπόρως ἐβλάστησεν ("Christ, the saviour of mankind, was brought forth without seed"), Cyril *In Luc*. PG 72.485,20–21 ἀσπόρως πάντως συλληφθεὶς ἀφθόρως γεγέννηται ("he was conceived without seed at all, and was born incorruptly"), ibid. 72.501,50–51

ception of Christ appears a few lines after the author has explained why Jesus chose John as the disciple with whom Mary would live, since both were virgins, in [Cyril's] *Encomium* of Mary. This work also displays correspondences with Nonnus' account as far as the affinity of the Evangelist with the Mother of God is concerned. The author of the *Encomium* hails John and Mary calling both ἀμίαντον σκεῦος, in reference to their chastity (PG 77.1032,33 and 38). Similarly, Nonnus uses for John the same terms that he uses for Mary in regard to his virginity (*Par.* 19.140 and 141 παρθένον υἷα, φιλοπάρθενε, the latter designating John's deliberate choice of virginity, a choice identical to the decision made by the Virgin Mary, discussed above). Nonnus' reference to the moral closeness between Mary and John when he is rendering John 19.26–27 is all the more justified and suitable, since Ephesus, the city in which Cyril's ideas concerning the theological status of the Virgin circulated, is also the city to which, according to tradition, John travelled accompanied by Mary. Cyril preached in the church of St. John at Ephesus in the summer of 431.[622] Those who condemned Nestorius associated the city with the sojourn of St. John and the Virgin there in the light of the Council and its outcome.[623] Furthermore, at the time of the Council, the Ephesians themselves backed Cyril, one of the reasons for this being the fact that the cult of the Virgin was predominant in the city, which took pride in the tomb of St. John and the basilica of the Virgin.[624] Cf. also the praise of John with reference to his connection to Ephesus in the *Encomium* (τῆς Ἐφεσίων λιμὴν καὶ προμάχος, PG 77.1032,30–31).

Given all this, it is possible that Cyril's writings on the Nestorian controversy and material echoed in the *Encomium to Mary*, attributed to Cyril, provided the background for Nonnus' reworking of John 19.26–27, in which verbal elaboration is very typically combined with cardinal Mariological and Christological doctrine. Nonnus also seems to have been familiar with the work of Epiphanius directed against heretics, as is suggested by certain ideas common to this and in the passages of the *Paraphrase* discussed above, namely Joseph's paternity

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ἀσπόρως συνέλαβε, καὶ ἀφθόρως ἔτεκεν ("she conceived without seed and gave birth incorruptly"), *Enc. in S. Mar. Deip.* PG 77.1032,45–46 συνέλαβες γὰρ ἀσπόρως, θεοπρεπῶς δὲ ἐγέννησας ("you conceived without seed and gave birth as befits God"; our translations). See also Franchi (2012b), pp. 147–151.

622 See McGuckin (1994), p. 281 with n. 1.

623 Cf. the synodical epistle, addressed to the clergy and the people, which summarises the condemnation of Nestorius, ACO 1.1,2,70,7–9 Schwartz.

624 See McGuckin (1994), p. 60. For the problem of John's two tombs in Ephesus (perhaps explained through the suggestion that one was the original tomb and the other the catacomb to which John's remains were transferred), see the discussion of Culpepper (1994), p. 148.

of Christ's "brothers", John 19.26–27 as evidence for Mary's perpetual virginity, John the Apostle's suitability to live with Mary (this repeated also in Cyril) and the Virgin who gives birth without pain.

H.1.b Jesus as Stranger to the World

The foreigness of Jesus to the world is emphasised in several passages of John. Jesus comes to the world from another place (ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, *I am not of this world*, 8.23), His goal is unknown (ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω, *but you do not know where I come from or where I am going*, 8.14; cf. 8.25 ff. and 7.35) and He comes from an unknown God (ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἀληθινὸς ὁ πέμψας με, ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε, *He who sent me is true, and him you do not know*, 7.28; cf. 8.14 and 9.29 f.). Jesus also says to Pilate ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (*my kingdom is not of this world*, John 18.36). Furthermore, such foreignness concerns both Christ and the disciples (John 15.18–19 and 17.49–50, discussed below). Distance from the world and its logic is also implied when others misunderstand Jesus' words (as in the case of Nicodemus: πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος γεννηθῆναι γέρων ὤν; *how can a man be born when he is old?*, John 3.4; cf. 2.20 and 7.35). Before investigating Nonnus' passages which convey explicitly the notion of Christ's "strangeness" to His environment through the term ξένος, a brief outline of the word and of the idea it expresses in the Old and New Testament and in other Christian literature is useful.

The idea of Christ as foreign to the world which is inimical to Him is rooted in all the Gospels,[625] either more or less explicitly stated. In Mark 12.1–12 Jesus tells a parable of a man who, having left his vineyard in the hands of vinedressers, sends his only son in order to collect the fruit, who is then killed by the vinedressers. At Luke 9.58 Jesus speaks of the Son of Man as being lonely and unprotected, in a sense, in the world.[626] As one alien to the world, Jesus announces His departure in the Parable of the Talents in Matthew (25.14–30). Jesus also announces His second coming to earth: γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται in Mark (13.35).[627]

When the term ξένος actually appears, it bears either positive or negative connotations. In *Sir*. 29.21–28, in the Old Testament, its implications are neg-

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625 Kittel, Friedrich, Bromiley (1985), s.v. *xénos*, D. 3a (p. 595). See also H. Bietenhard in Brown, Coenen, Beyreuther, Bietenhard (1975), vol. 1, p. 689, n. 4.

626 Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνῃ (*foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head*).

627 *Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come*. Cf. Mark 13.24–27.

ative, in a passage concerning the humiliation of being a stranger. Similarly, at *Ps*. 68(69).8–10 the image of the stranger conveys the idea of a being in miserable state.[628] On the other hand, in *Sap. Sal.* 19.14 the term "strangers" (ξένους), joined to the noun "benefactor" (εὐεργέτας), has a positive meaning, as it implies that strangers are to be welcomed. Similarly, in Mat. 25.35, a highly influential Gospel passage, ξένος acquires positive overtones, and is linked to Christ Himself: the term is used in the context of hospitality and welcome which the Son of Man expects to enjoy from people, through their own hospitality to each other.[629] Nevertheless, the term later describes Christ's alienation to the world. Such is the case of Cyril's *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum*, PG 69.232,16 and PG 69.232,17. In both passages, Cyril stresses the paradox of the Son's coming to His *own* world and the world treating Him as a stranger (καὶ ἦν ὡς ξένος ἐν ἰδίῳ τῷ κόσμῳ). When he writes these passages, Cyril is clearly thinking of John, since he takes up John's statement of 1.11 (see below) and adds to it the overt reference to Jesus' "foreignness" through the adjective ξένος. Bearing divine connotations, the theme of ξένος also appears in a text attributed to Epiphanius, the *Homilia in divini corporis sepulturam* (PG 43.445 C–D). It recurs several times as a *Leitmotif* employed by Joseph of Arimathea when he asks Pilate for the body of Christ: δός μοι τοῦτον τὸν ξένον· τί γάρ σε ὠφελεῖ τὸ σῶμα τούτου τοῦ ξένου; ("give me this stranger; of what use is to you the body of this stranger?"), κτλ.

We will discuss below Nonnus' use of ξένος, a term absent in the *Vorlage*, and also of other phrasings of a similar meaning, which highlight the gap between Jesus and His entourage both on the level of communication and understanding and on that of essence and origin.

***Par.* 1.30–31**	**John 1.11**
ἐγγὺς ἔην ἰδίων, ἴδιοι δέ μιν ἄφρονι λύσσῃ ὡς ξένον οὐκ ἐγέραιρον.	εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον.

628 *Ps*. 68(69)8–10: ἀπηλλοτριωμένος ἐγενήθην τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου καὶ ξένος τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς μητρός μου, ὅτι ὁ ζῆλος τοῦ οἴκου σου κατέφαγέν με, καὶ οἱ ὀνειδισμοὶ τῶν ὀνειδιζόντων σε ἐπέπεσαν ἐπ' ἐμέ (*I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me*).

629 Ἐπείνασα γὰρ καὶ ἐδώκατέ μοι φαγεῖν, ἐδίψησα καὶ ἐποτίσατέ με, ξένος ἤμην καὶ συνηγάγετέ με (*for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me*). For discussion and interpretation of this famous passage, see Luz (2005), pp. 264–274, 278–279.

(*cont.*)

Par. 1.30–31	John 1.11
Near was He to His own [people], but His own, in senseless rage, did not honor Him as a guest.	He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

Nonnus introduces right at the start of the poem a concept that is to occur in the later parts of the work. In combination with ἴδιοι, Nonnus' word ξένος makes clear John's bitter irony. Although the Logos is in its home, it is regarded as a stranger. This idea is handled in similar fashion in the passages from Cyril's *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum*, quoted above.

Par. 8.53–54	John 8.23
ξεῖνος ἔφυν κόσμοιο καὶ οὐ βροτὸν οἶδα τοκῆα· ξεῖνος ἐγὼ κόσμοιο καὶ αἰθέρος εἰμὶ πολίτης. (I) was born a stranger to the world, and do not know a mortal parent; I am a stranger to the world, and a citizen of the aether.	ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. I am not of this world.

In strictly rhetorical terms, the paraphrast simply explains the meaning of the Gospel verse, namely that Christ does not belong to the earthly world. To do this, he employs *anaphora* (ξεῖνος) and *anadiplosis* (κόσμοιο) and the term πολίτης, which is metaphorical in this context. The *anaphora* adds weight to the additions made by Nonnus in the rephrasing of the Gospel text, namely the concept that Jesus is a "stranger" and the idea that Jesus does not have a mortal parent.[630] The use of the image of the stranger sharpens the Johannine verse and repetition emphasises the extraordinariness of Christ.

630 Ridderbos (1997), p. 300, on the Johannine verse: "The difference is rooted in their origin and his origin: they are from below, he is from above; they are of this world, he is not of this world. The same antithesis … refers, rather, to the contrast between the world of God and God's Spirit, in which light and life are created, and the world of humankind

In Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman, the woman describes the life-giving water of Jesus as ξένος: ἀπὸ χθονίοιο δὲ κόλπου / τοῦτο πόθεν ζείδωρον ἀρυόμενος ξένον ὕδωρ / αὐτὸς ἔχεις ποτὸν ἄλλο; (*how from the earthly bosom / do you draw this foreign, life-giving water?*, *Par.* 4.53–55). Thus, Nonnus manages both to emphasise the woman's incomprehension of the actual nature of Jesus' water and to characterise Jesus' message and actual presence as things foreign to the world. Therefore, it is perhaps not only because of the rules of *xenia* that in Eudocia's retelling of the account (*Homerocentones* 1046 ff.) the Samaritan woman repeatedly addresses Jesus as ξεῖνος.[631]

The same pattern appears elsewhere in the *Paraphrase* as an autonomous addition by Nonnus. In Book 17 the poet elaborates on the idea that Christ does not come from this world, in the context of the prayer to the Father pronounced for the disciples by Jesus. In this case, too, the term ξένος is employed in order to clarify the idea that Christ does not belong to this world, a statement already present in the Johannine text, albeit not expressed by the term ξένος:

***Par.* 17.47–51**	**John 17.14**
καί σφισι θεῖον ὄπασσα τεὸν λόγον· ἀλλὰ μεγαίρων αὐτοὺς ἔστυγε κόσμος, ὅτι ζαθέου γενετῆρος γνήσιοι αἰθέρος εἰσί, νόθοι κόσμοιο πολῖται, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ κόσμοιο πέλω ξένος· οὐ βροτέης γάρ εἰμὶ τελεσσιγάμοιο γονῆς χθονός.	ἐγὼ δέδωκα αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον σου, καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς, ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου.
And I granted them your divine word, but in resentment the world abhorred them, because from the divine begetter they are the trueborn [offspring] of the aether, but are baseborn citizens of the world, just as I am foreign to the world; for I am not of the mortal stock of the earth, which comes to be through marriage.	I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

in its creaturely dependence and fallen existence". For the discussion of the passage as an instance of (emphatic) *anaphora*, see above, *B. Synonymic Amplificatio and Verbal / Adjectival Accumulation, 2. Anaphora.*

631 See Caprara (2005), p. 187.

To explain the verse in John, Nonnus uses rhetorical devices, such as personification ("envious world", μεγαίρων κόσμος, in *hyperbaton*)[632] and a number of strong metaphorical images. Nonnus does not avoid the repetition of the term κόσμος, present in the Gospel: the genitive κόσμοιο is repeated twice, probably because of the importance of the concept in this context. The strongest antithesis is, obviously, the one between earth and heaven; consequently, those who do not belong to this world are "νόθοι", literally "bastards". The term is largely attested in both Nonnus' works with the metaphorical meaning "fake" or "false".[633] In this context it is closer to its original meaning, since it stands in strong opposition to the adjective γνήσιοι. Nonnus thus creates a powerful image, which enables him to reverse, so to speak, the negative connotations of the term νόθος. Paradoxically, it becomes a statement of pride, as it underlines the distance between the disciples and the *saeculum*.[634]

The same notion, which Nonnus again employs the word νόθος to convey, appears in Book 15. The idea of the distance of Christ, and by extension, of the disciples from the world is found in John 15.18–19:[635] (εἰ ὁ κόσμος ὑμᾶς μισεῖ, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐμὲ πρῶτον ὑμῶν ἐμίσησεν. Εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἦτε, ὁ κόσμος ἂν τὸ ἴδιον ἐφίλει· ὅτι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ ἐστέ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, διὰ τοῦτο μισεῖ ὑμᾶς ὁ κόσμος),[636] the final phrase modified by Nonnus with the addition of the concept of νόθος.

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632 For μεγαίρω as "grudge", expressing a sentiment ranging from resentment to envy, see LSJ s.v. Marcellus (1861, p. 245) translates "le monde envieux". The theme of envy, absent in the Gospel, can be traced in the beginning of John Chrysostom's homily 82 on John (PG 59.442,40–45), a comment on this particular Gospel verse: φθονοῦντες γὰρ τοῖς ἐπιεικῶς βιοῦν βουλομένοις, καὶ οἰόμενοι παρασκευάζειν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολογίαν, ἐὰν τὴν ἑτέρων δόξαν καταβάλωσι, μισοῦσί τε ὡς τὰ ἐναντία μετιόντας καὶ πάντα πράττουσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ καταισχύνειν τὸν βίον τὸν ἐκείνων; *indeed, since they are envious of those who strive to live uprightly, and because they think they are providing an excuse for themselves, if they can defame the good, they both hate them as exponents of conduct opposite to their own, and make every effort to dishonor the way of life of their rivals*).

633 In the *Dionysiaca*, the term is employed several times in the context of metamorphic scenes: it indicates a "fake" or illusory aspect of the metamorphic shape of a deity. See Gigli Piccardi (2003), pp. 124–125, n. 31.

634 See also Rotondo (2017a), pp. 195–196, (2017b), pp. 228–230. See also Savelli (1998), on *Par.* 15.78, pp. 194–195.

635 See also Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), p. 115.

636 *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

Par. 15.78–79	John 15.19
ὡς νόθον, ἀνδρομέης οὐ γνήσιον αἷμα γενέθλης ὑμέας ἔστυγε κόσμος.	διὰ τοῦτο μισεῖ ὑμᾶς ὁ κόσμος
as the baseborn, and not as the trueborn offspring of the human race the world abhorred you.	therefore the world hates you

In *Par.* 17.50–51, the idea is strengthened by the insertion of the term ξένος followed by a figure of *litotes*, which stresses once again Christ's extraneousness to the world: *I am not of the mortal / stock of the earth, which comes to be through marriage*, where the adjective τελεσσίγαμος seems to be a Nonnian coinage. Apart from appearing in Nonnus' works,[637] it occurs only in Musaeus.[638] The term ξένος recurs in *Par.* 20.64, where it is attributed to Christ whom Mary of Magdala has not recognised. In this context, the noun at the most basic level simply indicates a "stranger". Nevertheless, the idea of Christ's extraneousness to the world is always present, albeit allusively expressed.[639] Furthermore, as is pointed out by Spanoudakis (2014, p. 251), another term used by Nonnus *extra Joannem* to underline Christ's alienation from the world is ἀήθης. In *Par.* 3.67–68 Christ-Logos is shown as joining ἀθανάτην ἕο μορφήν with ἀήθεϊ σαρκί. In *Par.* 19.79 the Jews who demand crucifixion for Jesus reject Him as an ἀήθεα κοίρανον. In the same Book (ll. 123–124), when the soldiers who crucify Christ cast lots for his seamless robe, they call it ἀήθεα χιτῶνα, which possesses a τύπον ξένον.

Nonnus' emphasis on the idea of "foreignness", either through the use of the explicit term ξένος or through more or less extended phrasings which convey the same notion, continually underlines Jesus' metaphysical alienation from the world.[640] It has been further suggested that such accounts, which portray the part of people who oppose or do not follow Christ in the darkest possible colours, also underscore the difference between belief and incredulity and are designed to urge the readers towards the right faith.[641]

637 It occurs rather often in the *Dionysiaca*: 48.827, 13.102, 27.317, 36.62, 8.179, 8.85, 36.24, 7.150, 41.185, 8.198, 9.4, 32.58.
638 *Hero et Leander* 279.
639 See Accorinti (1996), pp. 103 and 177, Caprara (2005), p. 187.
640 As Caprara (2005, p. 187) puts it. See also Rotondo (2017a), pp. 191–196.
641 See Rotondo (2017b). For the opposition between belief and disbelief in Jesus' entourage as a focal conflict in the Gospel itself, see Culpepper (1983), pp. 89–98, esp. 97–98.

H.1.c Jesus' Life as Ransom, Perfect Love and the Participle πασιμέλουσα

The passage below is drawn from Jesus' speech addressed to the disciples, where they are instructed to love each other in the same way the Master loved them, since the greatest love possible consists of giving one's life for one's friends. Here Nonnus includes the idea of ransom, which does not appear in the original text, to clarify the Gospel text.

Par. **15.48–51**	**John 15.13**
ἐγὼ δ' ἄρα μείζονα ταύτης τοσσατίης ἀγάπης ἑτέρην οὐκ οἶδα νοῆσαι, λύτρον ἑῶν ἑτάρων ζωάγριον ὄφρα τις αὐτήν ψυχὴν πασιμέλουσαν ἀλεξήτειραν ὀπάσσῃ.	μείζονα ταύτης ἀγάπην οὐδεὶς ἔχει, ἵνα τις τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ θῇ ὑπὲρ τῶν φίλων αὐτοῦ.
I truly cannot perceive another love larger than this so great a one, that one should cede his very life as ransom for the life of his companions—his precious life— to keep them from harm.	Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

From a lexical point of view, there are no radical changes in the first part of the Gospel verse (only the adjective τοσσατίης is added). Nevertheless, Nonnus alters the shape of the *Vorlage* by switching from the impersonal (οὐδείς) to the first person (ἐγώ). The Johannine text is expanded through the inclusion of the concept of ransom, used by Nonnus also in *Par.* 10.40–41, where the Good Shepherd, for the sake of the sheep, does not spare his own life: ἀλλά ἑ θήσει / λύτρον ἑῶν οἰῶν (rendering John 10.11 τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων, *the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep*). At *Par.* 10.41 Nonnus introduces the idea of λύτρον, stating that the Good Shepherd would ransom his flock. The idea of the ransom, which does not appear in John, is probably due to the influence of the Synoptic Gospels.[642]

642 Mat. 20.28 ὥσπερ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν (*even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*) and Mark 10.45 καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν (*for even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*). It has been suggested that the idea of Jesus' death as ransom for humanity and its sins

At *Par.* 15.50, the notion of ransom assumes epic overtones through the insertion of the adjective ζωάγριον, which alludes to a customary practice, the payment of the ζωάγρια[643] to the captor, so that a prisoner might be released. In the next line, the noun ψυχήν is embellished with the adjective πασιμέλουσαν. This occurs in other passages of the *Paraphrase*: 1.10, 6.137, 19.179. In the first two it qualifies the noun ζωή, referring to life that Christ is / offers to humanity, and it has to be interpreted as "loved by everyone".[644] In the passage discussed here, Nonnus lays particular stress on the importance of Christ's offer of Himself, the idea enhanced by the chiastic structure of the line: the participle πασιμέλουσαν, qualifying the verb's object, ψυχήν, is juxtaposed to the adverbial predicate ἀλεξήτειραν, "protector" (only here in the *Paraphrase*),[645] also referring to ψυχήν. Ἀλεξήτειρα can be seen as a variation of the adjective ἀλεξίκακος, used elsewhere in the *Paraphrase* of the divinity (2.19 of Christ's voice; 11.12 of Christ; 11.90 of God the Father), and attributed to Christ and the Cross by Gregory of Nyssa.[646]

The other adjectival attribute, πασιμέλουσαν, "loved by everyone",[647] can be interpreted in two ways here, both of which underline the importance of Jesus'

originates from sacred manumission, the liberation of a slave through his consecration to a god or goddess. See Versnel (1990), p. 89, n. 171.

643 The term is used twice in Homer: *Il.* 18.407, *Od.* 8.462. For the use of ζωαγρέω in the epic, see further Savelli (1998), pp. 160–161.

644 In the *Dionysiaca* the adjective occurs at 4.92, 31.94, 40.351, *al.* The term has this meaning there, too (cf. 31.94 πασιμέλουσα Θέμις). See De Stefani (2002), p. 114 and Franchi (2013), pp. 427–428.

645 In the *Dionysiaca*, for instance, 12.381, 21.126, 23.162, 25.529, 29.156, 33.232, 35.315, 36.142, 42.199. The adjective qualifies also Dionysus and the wine, the "protectors" of mankind (cf. 29.156, 33.232). In this case, too, the salvific qualities of Christ and Dionysus are described in similar terms. See Savelli (1998), pp. 161–162, and above, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 1. The Raised Serpent, The (healing) Saviour, Eternity.*

646 PG 46.737,9 f. τὸν ἀλεξίκακον καὶ παντοδύναμον σταυρὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *Carm. Dogm.* 517,8 Χριστὸν θνητοῖσιν ἀλεξίκακον βασιλέα. The adjective describe deities in pagan literature who save people (Zeus, Hercules, Dionysus). See Spanoudakis (2014b), p. 160 (on *Par.* 11.12c). On its the use in the context of baptism, see also above, *E. "Theatrical" Elements: Impressive Visualisation, Description of Scenery, Effects of Sound, 1. Description of John the Baptist and his Baptism.*

647 Marcellus (1861, p. 223) translates *Par.* 15.48–51 as "je ne connais pas d'amour plus grand, ou même égal à celui qui offre jusqu'à la vie, *si chère à tous*, pour la rédemption de son compagnons, et pour leur délivrance". In the old editions (Nansius 1589, p. 217, Sylburg 1596, p. 191, and Abram 1623, p. 176) πασιμέλουσαν here is rendered as *omnibus charam.* Cf. Bordatus (1561, p. 145): *animan quae omnibus est curae*. Prost (2003, p. 178) translates as "valiant" and Hadjittofi (above) as "precious". Sherry (1991, p. 251) translates as "renown" (*sic*). Savelli (1998, p. 61) translates "che a tutti sta a cuore" and interprets ad loc. "di cui tutti se curano". See also the fourth note below.

offer, each from a different point of view. According to the first view, a contrast of sorts is created between πασιμέλουσαν and ἀλεξήτειραν: "loved by everyone" refers to the love that each person who offers his life feels for his own life. The significance of Christ's sacrifice is stressed in this reading through the juxtaposition of πασιμέλουσαν and ἀλεξήτειραν, which places side by side the cost of one's sacrifice for oneself and the importance of this sacrifice for others, and subsequently underscores the ultimate grandeur of the act. The greatest love occurs when a person offers his own life, naturally most dear to him, for the sake of other persons' protection against evils. One offers (ὀπάζει) one's ψυχή, *although* it is the object of one's care and affection, to make it the shield and defence of others. In the second interpretation, the life of the one who offers (Jesus) is loved by everyone, i.e., by the whole world. When the life is also immediately presented as ἀλεξήτειρα, offered as a means of defence (of everyone, against every danger), the magnitude of the impact of Christ's offer is emphatically highlighted: a ψυχή that provokes love in mankind also defends mankind. The πασιμέλουσα in this interpretation, and possibly in ambiguity between the traditional passive ("loved") and the active sense ("loving"),[648] might be also alluding to the idea that the offer of Christ's ψυχή, i.e., Christ's self-sacrifice, concerns everyone, is enacted *for the sake* of everyone, which stresses the universality of the impact made by the divine offer and humanity's involvement in it. In this respect, Nonnus' line implicitly echoes Paul's statement (*2Corinth.* 5.14) ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν· ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον,[649] often commented upon by the Fathers, and actually quoted by Cyril in his commentary on the Johannine passage which Nonnus is here rephrasing (John 15.13: Cyril, *Jo.* 2.576,5–7 Pusey).

Perhaps Nonnus is deliberately oscillating between the two possible interpretations of πασιμέλουσα: the (human) person who offers his life, in Jesus' example, can be expected to love this life above everything else, so that the cost of his self-sacrifice, and hence its weight and significance, is magnified. However, given that the reader knows that this person is actually the Son of God, the idea of a love bond between Him and humanity[650] is more reasonable than that of the instinct for self-protection, egoistic in some fashion, implicit in the first interpretation.

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648 For this rarer and later meaning of μέλω, constructed with the dative ("care for"), see LSJ s.v. B I 1.

649 *For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died.*

650 For God's love for humanity as the motivation of the Second Person's incarnation in Cyril, see Koen (1991), pp. 86–88.

At *Par.* 19.179, πασιμέλουσαν describes the πλευρήν of the crucified Christ, pierced by the soldier's lance when Jesus expired. Blood and water gush out from the wound:

***Par.* 19.178–181**	**John 19.34**
ἀλλὰ θορὼν ἀκίχητος ἀνὴρ ἀνεμώδεϊ λόγχῃ πλευρὴν πασιμέλουσαν ἀφειδέι νύξε μαχαίρῃ· καὶ διδύμαις λιβάδεσσιν ἀπὸ πλευροῖο τυπέντος πρῶτα μὲν αἷμα χύθη, μετέπειτα δὲ θέσκελον ὕδωρ.	ἀλλ' εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ.
Instead, a swift man sprang up with his spear cutting through wind, and pricked with the unsparing knife His world-famed side. And with twin drops from the pierced side first flowed blood and then holy water.	But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

Translators render πασιμέλουσα here as "precious", "loved" or "famed".[651] Its use to describe Christ's side, peculiar though it may seem at first, is justified through the interpretation of the event. It is in the wound in Christ's side that all humans can be washed and, consequently, saved,[652] it is in the water that

651 Bordatus (1561, p. 179) translates *latus, quod omnibus curae esse debet*. Nansius (1589, p. 267) translates *latus omnibus charum*, Sylburg (1596, p. 238) and Abram (1623, p. 219) *latus charum*. Marcellus (1861, p. 279) "ce flanc si précieux", Accorinti (1987, p. 22) "l'amatissimo costato". Sherry (1991, p. 271) translates "the renown side" (probably a slip for "renowned") and Prost (2003, p. 207) "His precious side".

652 Cf. Hippolytus (third century), *De Antichr.* 11 Achelis (H. Achelis, *Hippolyt's kleinere exegetische und homiletische Schriften*, vol. 1.2. Leipzig, 1897, pp. 1–47) ἐξ ἧς πλευρᾶς ἔβλυσαν δύο πηγαί, αἵματος καὶ ὕδατος, δι' ὧν τὰ ἔθνη ἀπολουόμενα καθαίρονται ("from this side two streams gushed forth, one of blood and one of water, in which the nations are washed and cleansed"; our translation). Accorinti (1987, ad loc.) cites Prudentius' *Cathemerion* 9.85–87 *o novum caede stupenda vulneris miraculum! / Hinc cruoris fluxit unda, lymfa parte ex altera; / lymfa nempe dat lavacrum, tum corona ex sanguine est* (*how strange the marvel of the wound in His amazing death! / Here flowed a stream of blood, there water: / water gives washing, and the crown won with blood*; tr. H.J. Thomson, *Prudentius*, vol. 1, Cambridge, MA, *Loeb Classical Library*, 1949). A modern rendering is Schnackenburg (1980 [vol. 2]), p. 55, referring to John 19.34: "the Lamb of God … who was pierced and out of whose body there flows a stream of life and blsessing". For the allusion to "the living water", see also Jensen (2017), p. 8.

the participants in the Mysteries of the Church are "reborn" and it is the body of Christ, which the πλευρά represents, and the blood that came out of this πλευρά that are communicated to every member of the Church through the Eucharist, as John Chrysostom stresses in his commentary on the Johannine account of the matter.[653] In fact, water was indeed mixed with wine in the chalice of the Eucharist from early on, long before Nonnus' times,[654] and later Germanus (eighth century) associates explicitly this practice with the water and blood from Christ's side as described in John 19.34, when he explains the parts of the Liturgy.[655] As regards the Byzantine Liturgy, employed in the Orthodox East up to the present, the priest divides the central piece, the ἀμνός, and the other μερίδες of the Bread with a small knife, which is actually called a λόγχη and represents the soldier's spear. This practice is commented upon by Byzantine authors.[656] The term λόγχη is documented as early as in the eighth century, again in Germanus' description of the liturgical practice just discussed. Germanus clearly states that the liturgical lance stands for the soldier's lance, which pierced Christ's side.[657] The earliest mention of this liturgical knife, albeit not in connection with the term "lance", is found in a story set in Lower Egypt, belonging to the fifth-sixth century collection *Apophthegmata Patrum*,

653 Cf. John Chrys. homily 85 (on John 19.16–20.9), PG 59.463,25–32 οὐχ ἁπλῶς δὲ οὐδὲ ὡς ἔτυχεν αὗται ἐξῆλθον αἱ πληγαί· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων τούτων ἡ Ἐκκλησία συνέστηκε. Καὶ ἴσασιν οἱ μυσταγωγούμενοι δι' ὕδατος μὲν ἀναγεννώμενοι, δι' αἵματος δὲ καὶ σαρκὸς τρεφόμενοι. Ἐντεῦθεν ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τὰ μυστήρια, ἵν' ὅταν προσίῃς τῷ φρικτῷ ποτηρίῳ, ὡς ἀπ' αὐτῆς πίνων τῆς πλευρᾶς, οὕτω προσίῃς (*it was not accidentally or by chance that these streams came forth, but because the Church has been established from both of these. Her members know this, since they have come to birth by water and are nourished by Flesh and Blood. The Mysteries have their source from there, so that when you approach the awesome chalice you may come as if you were about to drink from His very side*). Cf. also Theodore of Mopsuestia, *In Jo.* fr. 136.21–23.

654 Evidence exists at least from the second century onwards. See Taft (2000), pp. 443–446.

655 *Hist. Eccl.* 22 ὁ δὲ οἶνος καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ [ἐστὶ τὸ ἐξελθὸν ἐκ τῆς πλευρᾶς αὐτοῦ αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ, καθὼς] ὁ προφήτης λέγει, κτλ. ("the wine and the water [are the blood and water which gushed from His side, as] the prophet says", etc.). The phrase enclosed in brackets, which links the water and wine of the cup of the Eucharist with John 19.34, is not included in all manuscripts (see Taft 2000, p. 446). In another passage of the same work, however, the association between the wounded side and the gifts of the Eucharist is clear: τὸ δὲ ποτήριόν ἐστι ἀντὶ τοῦ σκεύους οὗ ἐδέξατο τὸ ἐκβλύσαν τῆς αἱμαχθείσης ἀχράντου πλευρᾶς καὶ χειρῶν καὶ ποδῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀπομύρισμα (ibid. 39; "the cup stands for the vase which received the ointment that gushed from the blooded immaculate side and hands and feet of Christ", our translations).

656 Such as Theodore Studites earlier (eight–ninth century) and Nicolaus Cabasilas much later (fourteenth century): see Taft (2000), pp. 348–349, Bradshaw and Johnson (2012), pp. 154–155. For a detailed description of the practice, see Taft (2000), pp. 330–333.

657 *Hist. Eccl.* 21–22.

where the instrument is simply called μάχαιρα.[658] It is probably significant that Nonnus uses both λόγχη and μάχαιρα to describe the soldier's spear here. It can be assumed that the poet does have in mind the ecclesiastical reenactment of the Passion of Christ, when he implies that the πλευρά is pierced for the sake of the whole of humanity and produces the means for humanity's salvation, whatever the term used in Nonnus' time for the liturgical knife employed to divide the Bread. The adjective θέσκελον that the poet uses for the water which gushed from Christ's side is all the more appropriate if he is hinting at the Mysteries of the Church (cf. John Chrysostom's comment, cited above). As we have seen above, πασιμέλουσα is to be interpreted as "loved by everyone" at *Par.* 1.10 and 6.137, where it is attributed to ζωή, the life that Christ is or offers to humanity. Here, too, πασιμέλουσα has this passive sense, recognised by the dictionaries ("loved by everyone"). Still, perhaps the active sense ("loving everyone") applies to this passage (*Par.* 19.179), as it might also apply to *Par.* 15.51, discussed above. Nevertheless, the active sense would require a figure of personification here and thus seems somewhat less probable.

H.1.d Details of the Crucifixion. Jesus and Peter

The passage below belongs to the account of the Crucifixion and illustrates how the Passion of Christ gives Nonnus the opportunity to provide the audience with an impressively more detailed description of the event, in comparison to John's narration. Nonnus inserts various important theological notions.

***Par.* 19.91–97**	**John 19.18**
κεῖθι φονῆες	ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν
εἰς δόρυ τετράπλευρον ἐπήορον ὑψόθι γαίης	
ὄρθιον ἐξετάνυσσαν, ἐπισφίγξαντες ἀνάγκῃ	There they crucified him
πεπταμένας ἑκάτερθε σιδηρείῳ τινὶ δεσμῷ	
χεῖρας, ὁμοτρήτοισι πεπαρμένον ἄζυγι γόμφῳ	
διπλόον ἕλκος ἔχοντα, μιῇ τετορημένον ὁρμῇ	
ποσσὶν ὁμοπλεκέεσσιν, ἀκαμπέα δεσμὸν ὀλέθρου.	

658 *Apophth. Patr.* (J.-C. Guy, *Les apophtegmes des pères. Collection systématique, chapitres xvii–xxi.* Sources chrétiennes 498, Paris 2005) 18.4,40. See Taft (2000), pp. 349–350. Thanks are due to Archimandrite Gregory Ioannides for drawing our attention to this passage.

(*cont.*)

Par. 19.91–97	John 19.18
There, the assassins stretched Him out upright on a four-armed plank raised upon the earth, and they bound tight by force His hands, spread out on either side with a fetter of iron; and He was pierced through, His feet pricked together with a single nail, and He had a double wound from a single puncture in His interlaced feet, an unbending bond of doom.	

As for the description of the Crucifixion, it has been observed that the *Paraphrase* does not show any similarities with other texts, except for a few correspondences with the *Christus Patiens*[659] and, as distant echoes, with the scene in which Odysseus is tied to the mainmast and the *Passio* of the chained Prometheus.[660] The parallel between the mainmast and the cross is also clearly established in Artemidorus.[661] The Johannine text does not describe any cruel details of the torment[662] and the Synoptics do not give any explicit pieces of information about the Crucifixion either. On the other hand, the paraphrased text renders in six lines the single word ἐσταύρωσαν of the Gospel, so adding a number of details to emphasise the ruthlessness of the punishment.

Livrea and Accorinti commented on this problematic passage, pointing out that neither John nor the Synoptic Gospels mention any nails when they refer to the Crucifixion. They think it likely that Nonnus was the first source to mention three nails.[663] *Christus Patiens*, a poem of probably much later date,[664]

659 Livrea and Accorinti (1988), p. 263.

660 Accorinti (1987), p. 96, Livrea and Accorinti (1988), pp. 265 and 266.

661 *Onirocr.* 2.53 σταυροῦσθαι πᾶσι μὲν τοῖς ναυτιλλομένοις ἀγαθόν καὶ γὰρ ἐκ ξύλων καὶ ἥλων γέγονεν ὁ σταυρὸς ὡς καὶ τὸ πλοῖον, καὶ ἡ κατάρτιος αὐτοῦ ὁμοία ἐστὶ σταυρῷ ("crucifixion is a good sign for all sailors, because the cross is made from wood and nails, like the boat, and its mast resembles the cross"; our translation).

662 Ridderbos (1997), on verse 18, p. 608: "The Evangelists abstain from any attempt to describe this barbaric procedure […]. The New Testament has no trace of any passion mysticism oriented to the physical torture of Jesus".

663 Livrea and Accorinti (1988), p. 275.

664 Although scholarly opinion is not unanimous on the problem of the dating, the work is

has τρισήλῳ κείμενον ξύλῳ at l. 1488. Here, Nonnus states that two nails were used for the hands (πεπταμένας ἑκάτερθε σιδηρείῳ τινὶ δεσμῷ / χεῖρας) and, by using the adjective ὁμοπλεκέεσσιν, he implies that only one nail was used for both feet. The symbolism of the number is quite intricate, as the feet "intertwined" together and pierced by one nail may be explained as an allusion to the unity of the two natures of Christ[665] as well as the expressions πεπαρμένον ἄζυγι γόμφῳ (*pricked together with a single nail*), διπλόον ἕλκος ἔχοντα (receiving *a double wound*) and μιῇ ὁρμῇ (*from a single puncture*). The total number of three nails evokes the Trinity, and the Cross (τετράπλευρον) is related to the complex symbolism of the number four, which goes back to the Platonic cosmogonic tradition and alludes to the four elements,[666] the cardinal points, the seasons and the rivers of the Paradise.[667]

It is often pointed out that the first artistic representation of the crucified Christ with three nails is of a much later period (twelfth-thirteenth century),[668] and it has been argued that Nonnus' text did not exercise any influence on iconography.[669] There is evidence that the Cross in Christian worship appears in the East before the reign of Constantine, in these early years mainly on inscriptions, and that from Constantine onwards, its use became universal.[670] The images of the crucified Christ on it, however, appear later more widely.[671] One exceptionally early crucifix is a carnelian found in Constanza (second century).[672] Among early images of Christ the Crucified are the frescoes of a church of Gaza,

recently dated to not earlier than the eleventh century, on stylistic grounds. See Pollmann (2017), pp. 148–149 with n. 37, for further bibliography.

665 Livrea and Accorinti (1988), p. 268.

666 Cf. *Par*. 3.82; see above, on *D. Imagery with Theological Significance*, 2. *The Imperishable Abode*.

667 Livrea and Accorinti (1988), p. 264 and p. 268. See also Accorinti (1987), pp. 95–96. For the three nails symbolising the Trinity, see also J.W. Hewitt, "The Use of Nails in the Crucifixion", *Harvard Theological Review* 25 (1932), p. 33, Cames (1966), pp. 194–196.

668 See, for instance, Millet (1916), p. 416 with n. 1, mentioning, *inter alia*, Petropol. Georg. 298, fol. 158, Armenian manuscript of the four gospels of Bologna, n. 3290, fol. 22. See also Cames (1966), *passim*, Livrea and Accorinti (1988), pp. 275–276, with further references.

669 L.H. Grondijs, *L'iconographie Byzantine du Crucifié mort sur la Croix* (Utrecht 1947[2]), pp. 161–162.

670 See Bréhier (1904), pp. 18–23, Thoby (1959), pp. 11–21.

671 For a review of the possible explanations of the absence of Crucifixion iconography in early art (reluctance to portray God suffering such a horrible, barbaric torment, extreme reverence to the mystery, dogmatic reasons related to heretical attitudes of downgrading the humanity of Christ), see Jensen (2000), pp. 133–136 and ead. (2017), p. 48.

672 Thoby (1959), p. 19 and Pl. 1, n. 4 (British Museum).

described by Choricius,[673] an ivory box of the fifth century[674] and a wood relief from the door of Santa Sabina in Rome, dated to c. 430.[675] Interestingly, the depiction of the Crucifixion, which, along with other scenes, decorates an episcopal cope found in Panopolis, recalls the description of such copes by Asterius, Bishop of Amasea in the fourth century (*Hom. de divit. et Laz.*).[676] The garment is dated to the sixth-seventh century (and, as usual, the feet of Christ are placed parallel to each other). In Panopolis Akhmim, a gold medallion with a crucifix was also found, dated to the seventh century.[677]

It can be argued that the reference to three nails in Nonnus and later *Christus Patiens* probably suggests that it was believed, at least in some cultural contexts, that only one nail was actually used for the nailing of Christ's feet. This does not annul the further philosophical and dogmatic symbolism which the three nails pattern acquires in Nonnus. Unfortunately, archaeological evidence from Roman Jerusalem, provided by the remains of the only crucified person ever discovered, is not decisive as regards whether one or two nails were used on the feet.[678]

The participle πεπαρμένος (l. 95) occurs in patristic passages on the Crucifixion, literal or metaphorical (of Christ and Christ's followers), such as John Chrys. PG 49.407,16 and Greg. Nyss. PG 46.137,9. Other forms of the verb are also used in the same context: περονηθέντα at id. *Ad Theoph. adv. Apoll.* 3.1,128,8 Mueller, κατέπειραν at Eus. *Dem. Ev.* 10.8,79,9. The phrasing ἐπισφίγξαντες ἀνάγκῃ / πεπταμένας, for hands stretched out, anticipates the similar phrase used in Jesus' prophecy about Peter's martyrdom, where John's ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖρας σου καὶ ἄλλοι σε ζώσουσι καὶ οἴσουσι ὅπου οὐ θέλεις (*you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go*, 21.18) is rendered as τανύσεις σέο χεῖρας ἀνάγκῃ / καί σε περισφίγξουσιν ἀφειδέες ἀνέρες ἄλλοι (*you shall stretch out your hands under compulsion, / and other unsparing*

673 Choricius, *Laud. Marc.* 1.2,75. See Bréhier (1904), p. 39.
674 In the British Museum (Thoby 1959, Pl. V, n. 9; Jensen 2000, pp. 150, 164).
675 See Jensen (2000), p. 131, fig. 49.
676 See Bréhier (1904), pp. 35, 39. Image in Thoby (1959), Pl. VII, n. 17.
677 Image in Thoby (1959), Pl. VII, n. 16.
678 N. Haas ("Anthropological Observations on the Skeletal Remains from Giv'at Ha-Mivtar'", *Israel Exploration Journal* 20 [1970], 58) held that the two feet were nailed together, with a single nail, to the vertical beam of the cross. Y. Yadin ("Epigraphy and Crucifixion", *Israel Exploration Journal* 23 [1973], 18–22, esp. p. 21), maintained that the two feet were nailed together onto two plaques of wood, rather than the cross. J. Zias and E. Sekeles ("The Crucified Man from Giv'at Ha-Mivtar: A Reappraisal", *Israel Exploration Journal* 20 [1985], 22–27), argued that the two feet were nailed separately on the vertical beam of the cross. More bibliography ibid., p. 22, n. 3. See also Jensen (2017), p. 11.

men shall bind you tight, *Par.* 21.111–112). Scholarly opinion is not unanimous that crucifixion is the manner of death implied in John 21.18 for Peter.[679] Nevertheless, like Cyril, Nonnus seems to think that the phrase does refer to crucifixion.[680] Scholars have thought that the Johannine ζώννυσθαι is ambiguous, since the identification of "girding" with "handcuffing" is questionable.[681] On the other hand, the Nonnian περισφίγγειν, designating bondage more clearly, actually refers to Jesus' own crucifixion as the poet describes it at *Par.* 19.93. The verb σφίγγειν is occasionally used to describe tightening one's grip or a rope during capture and punishment and Nonnus also uses it in this context in the *Dionysiaca*.[682] Thus, at *Par.* 21.112, the poet elucidates John's reference to "girding" with a verb which refers straightforwardly to binding, being almost a repetition of the verb which Nonnus also uses for Christ's crucifixion (ἐπισφίγγειν / περισφίγγειν). The preposition περί that Nonnus employs in connection with Peter's martyrdom retains the idea of "girding" that the Johannine ζώννυσθαι bears, while the verb σφίγγειν inserts the notion of restriction through force and alludes more explicitly to death on the cross.

Nonnus further combines the image of literal bondage with the concept of the binding power of inescapable necessity. In his references to crucifixion, Nonnus uses vocabulary that echoes the classical notion of the "pressing, tightening need" found in Greek literature. In fact, Ἀνάγκη is typically connected to the image of the yoke and bondage.[683] In Presocratic philosophy it appears as a *binding* power. Parmenides speaks of the bonds (δεσμοί) with which Ἀνάγκη binds the world.[684] The close association of ἀνάγκη with bondage has led critics to suggest that its original meaning was the physical means of binding (chain or

679 For the view that the prophecy refers to martyrdom, more generally, see Schnackenburg (1982, [vol. 3]), on John 21.18, Ridderbos (1997) on John 21.18–19a. For the view that it refers specifically to crucifixion, see Barrett (1978) on John 21.18.

680 Cyril, *Jo.* 3.166,24–26 Pusey προμεμήνυκε γὰρ ὅτι τις αὐτὸν καὶ εἰς ἀνεθέλητόν τινα χώραν ἀποκομιεῖ, τουτέστι τὸν ἐν ᾧ κατέπηξαν τὸν σταυρὸν οἱ διώκοντες, ἤτοι τὴν εἰς αἷμα τιμωρίαν ἐπιθέντες αὐτῷ. Ἀνεθέλητον δὲ τῷ Πέτρῳ τὸν τοῦ σταυροῦ τόπον εἶναί φησι (*he predicts that someone will take him to a place he does not wish to go, that is, the place where his prosecutors, or those who condemned him to death, fixed him to a cross. He is saying that the place of the cross is the place where Peter does not wish to go*).

681 See Ridderbos (1997) on John 21.18–19a.

682 Cf. Herondas 5.25 σύσφιγγε τοὺς ἀγκῶνας, Nonnus *Dion.* 36.152 f. ἀλυκτοπέδῃσι … / σφιγγόμενον, 45.263 σφίγξεν ἀλυκτοπέδῃσι.

683 For early examples, cf., for instance, the Homeric ἴσχειν ἀνάγκῃ (*Od.* 4.557–558, 5.14, 17.143). See further Schreckenberg (1964), pp. 1–27 and *passim*.

684 Fr. 8.31 κρατερὴ γὰρ Ἀνάγκη / πείρατος ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἔχει, τό μιν ἀμφὶς ἐέργει (H. Diels, W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, vol. 1, Berlin 1951). See Schreckenberg (1964), p. 108.

cord).[685] "Fate" is also conceived as "binding" people.[686] Thus, Nonnus exploits the metaphorical idea of the *restraining* ἀνάγκη of the pagan philosophical past, transferring it to the tangible and dire reality of death by crucifixion and giving it a literal sense in the case of Christ and Peter. All in all, however, the philosophical concept of Ἀνάγκη, Necessity which cannot be overturned, is also allusively present in Nonnus' description of Jesus' and Peter's deaths.

In addition to the literal constraint which the crucified undergo, Nonnus probably further implies the inescapability of death, as he also does at *Par.* 11.39, on Lazarus' death (ὕπνον ἀναγκαῖον), and at *Par.* 18.25, on Christ's forthcoming death ([Jesus] ἰδὼν μέλλουσαν ἀνάγκην),[687] always using the term ἀνάγκη and its derivatives. As Livrea comments on *Par.* 18.25, Nonnus implies that Christ will ultimately conquer death and its "necessity", since Christ is the liberator of humanity from Fate and other yokes.[688] As regards Christ's death on the Cross, it might furthermore be suggested that the poet is reminding the reader that God's self-sacrifice was necessary for humanity's salvation. Eating God's flesh and drinking God's blood through the Second Person's incarnation and death is necessary for the attainment of eternal life (John 6.41–58). Jesus' surrender to death "for the life of the world" in these Johannine verses[689] can be interpreted both symbolically ("eaters" of Jesus' flesh, i.e. believers, acquire eternal life through Jesus' death) and literally, since eating and drinking the Lord's flesh and blood will be actually possible through the repeated Eucharist.[690] Cyril clearly interprets eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ as the recep-

685 It has been put forward that the word is connected with ἄγχειν and, consequently, that it might also be relevant to the binding cord: see Onians (1951), p. 332. Schreckenberg (1964, pp. 6–11, esp. p. 10) suggested that the original meaning of ἀνάγκη was "chain" ("Fessel"). For a criticism of this view, see A.W.H. Adkins, "The Yoke of Necessity", *CR* 16 (1966), pp. 68–70, esp. p. 69.

686 Cf., for instance, Μοῖρα "binding" warriors killed in Homer: Μοῖρα (…) (ἐ)πέδησε: *Il.* 4.517, 22.2, *Od.* 3.269. Parmenides also uses the Homeric formula: see Onians (1951), p. 332. For Fate as Ἀνάγκη, see Schreckenberg (1964), pp. 72–81. For some aspects of the ancient debate about the opposition between free will and fate / predestination, see the discussion of Bobzien (1998).

687 For the necessity of death, see Spanoudakis (2014b) on *Par.* 11.39 and, for a collection of passages, Schreckenberg (1964), pp. 66–71. For the "bondage" of Anagke as implied at *Par.* 19.93 with the participle ἐπισφίγξαντες, see Accorinti (1987) ad loc.

688 For Christ as a liberator from the "yoke" of the Mosaic Law, see Schreckenberg (1964), p. 103; for Christ as annuling Εἱμαρμένη and other embodiments of Anagke, see id., pp. 160–163.

689 John 6.51 καὶ ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ἡ σάρξ μού ἐστιν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς (*and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh*). Cf. also John 6.58 ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (*whoever feeds on this bread will live forever*). For the absence of John 6.41–54 from Nonnus' *Paraphrase*, probably due to a mistake in the transmission of the *Paraphrase*, see Franco (2013), pp. 454–455.

690 See Schnackenburg (1980, [vol. 2]), pp. 54–56.

tion of the Lord by the believers through the Holy Communion.[691] This notion by no means undermines or annihilates Christ's freedom in this conscious self-sacrifice.[692] As regards the ἀνάγκη of Peter's death of a martyr, this idea actually appears in Cyril's passing comment on John 21.18 ἄλλοι σε ζώσουσι καὶ οἴσουσι ὅπου οὐ θέλεις, *another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go* (in his discussion of John 13.36, where Jesus implicitly foretells Peter's death), 2.394,21–23 Pusey: ὁ κίνδυνος οὐ θελητὸς μέν, φορητὸς δ' οὖν ὅμως ὅταν ἐξ ἀνάγκης τινῶν ἐπιφέρηται (*they* [sc. the saints] *do not wish for this danger. Yet it is bearable when it has come to be born*). If one ignores this parallel and takes a broader view, the inevitability of Peter's martyrdom is emphasised not only in John (21.18–19), but also in the famous episode, in which Jesus appears to Peter, who considers escaping from Rome, and addresses him with the words εἰσέρχομαι εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην σταυρωθῆναι. This phrase makes Peter realise that Jesus requires him to die on the cross and this *shall* happen (*Acta Petri* 35.9–16 Vouaux;[693] note ἤμελλεν γίνεσθαι in 35.16). In this episode, the crucifixions of Jesus and Peter are overtly placed in parallel, since Christ is willing to be crucified again if Peter continues to refuse. This link, almost identification, between Christ and Peter through conscious self-sacrifice which Christ actually suggests is what makes Peter accept his death.[694] Thus, Nonnus' use of similar phrasing for Jesus' actual and Peter's prophesied crucifixion in *Par.* 19.93 and 21.111–112 respectively is in accord with Jesus' and Peter's close connection to each other in death, as this is found in John's Gospel[695] and is even more explicitly presented in the *Acts of Peter*.

H.2 *Trinitarian Theology*

H.2.a Relation between the Persons of the Trinity

The issue of the relationship between the persons of the Trinity was an essential part of theological debate in the early Church. The Gospel of John, with its

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691 *Jo.* 1.538,3–5 Pusey ὁ διὰ τῆς μεταλήψεως τῆς ἐμῆς σαρκὸς ἐμὲ δεχόμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ ζήσεται, πάντως ὅλος εἰς ἐμὲ μεταστοιχειούμενος, κτλ. (*whoever receives me into themselves through participation in my flesh will live, being wholly transformed into me*). Reference to the σάρξ of Christ with regard to the Holy Sacrament as a rite occurs as early as the second century: cf. Ignatius *Epist. vii gen.* 5.4 and 6.7. See also Bradshaw and Johnson (2012), pp. 46–47, and above, *D. Imagery with Theological Significance, 3. Imperishable* (*continued*)*: the Bread of Life, the True and Wise Bread*, discussion of *Par.* 6.127 ἄφθιτον and 135 ἐτήτυμον.

692 See below, *3. Other Notions, b. Freedom of Choice, i. Christ's Freedom.*

693 L. Vouaux, *Les actes de Pierre* (Paris 1922).

694 Ὑπέτρεψεν εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἀγαλλιώμενος καὶ δοξάζων τὸν κύριον, ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· σταυροῦμαι· ὃ εἰς τὸν Πέτρον ἤμελλεν γίνεσθαι (35.14–16). For Christ's voluntarily self-sacrifice, see Liébaert (1951), pp. 196–210 and below, *3. Other Notions, b. The Freedom of Choice, i. Christ's Freedom.*

695 For this idea, see further Blaine (2007, p. 173 with n. 49), who remarks characteristically

emphasis on the relationship of Father and Son and its numerous references to the Spirit,[696] played a crucial role in the development of Trinitarian doctrine.[697] During the fourth century, both sides in the Arian controversy made use of the Fourth Gospel in search of scriptural support for their beliefs.[698] By the first half of the fifth century, Arianism had already been defeated in the East. Yet, judging from Cyril's explicitly anti-Arian attitude in his commentary on John, the Orthodox Church still evidently thought that subordinationism was potentially dangerous.[699] It may not be surprising, then, that Nonnus, who follows faithfully Cyril's Christology,[700] shows a tendency to avoid potentially subordinationalist formulations in his *Paraphrase*.[701] As has been repeatedly pointed out, the poet emphasises the eternity of the Logos and His consubstantiality with the Father, both points violently opposed by Arians.[702] However, since Nonnus was a poet interested in theology rather than a theologian expressing himself through poetry, one must be careful not to assume *a priori* that he conforms to a rigid theological pattern.[703] Only a closer examination of those passages of the *Paraphrase* which deal with the issue of the relationship between the persons of the Trinity can reveal the extent to which Nonnus was involved in countering subordinationism as well as clarify the lines of exegesis which he adopted.

H.2.a.i Par. *14.108–114 and (the Lacking) ὁ πατὴρ μείζων μου ἐστίν. John 4.22b*

An equivalent for the phrase *the Father is greater than I* (John 14.28) is missing in the *Paraphrase* and Scheindler marks a lacuna of one verse at this point (*Par.* 14.115). Yet, given the importance the phrase had in the later stages of the Arian controversy,[704] a lacuna is not a satisfactory answer to the problem[705] and one should also consider the possibility that Nonnus omitted the point intentionally, especially since *Par.* 14.108–114 seems to form a self-contained whole.

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that "the *new shepherd* and the Good Shepherd lay down ther lives for the flock in the same way". See also Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 365–367.

696 Barrett (1978), p. 88.

697 Barrett (1978), p. 91.

698 Pollard (1970), p. 164; Wiles (1960), pp. 122–125.

699 McKinion (2000), pp. 10–11; Wiles (1960), pp. 6, 125.

700 See above, *1. Introduction, B. Dates and Chronology* with n. 33.

701 Cf. Sieber (2016), p. 316: "it would be a misconception to call the Christology of the *Paraphrase* one of subordination"; De Stefani (2002), p. 22: "Il poeta appare ansioso di evitare affermazioni interpretabili in senso ariano".

702 For instance, Koen (1991), pp. 56–60.

703 De Stefani (2002), p. 23, n. 79, Livrea (1989), p. 25.

704 Williams (2001), p. 109, Wiles (1960), p. 123.

705 Note also that no textual variation between the manuscripts of John's Gospel is reported by Metzger (1971, p. 246) for this section.

The meaning of the phrase in question was widely debated by the theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D.[706] Although we do not know how important Arius himself thought the passage,[707] there is no doubt that for many of his supporters and followers it was important proof of Jesus' inferiority to God the Father. It is in this context that John 14.28 is quoted in Athanasius of Anazarbus[708] and Eunomius[709] as well as in the Creed proclaimed by the Council of Sirmium in 357.[710] The passage is also mentioned by an anonymous Arian author refuted by Cyril of Alexandria in his comment on the verse.[711]

The efforts of the Orthodox theologians, in turn, were mainly aimed at demonstrating that the phrase simply cannot be interpreted in a subordinationist way, as the Arians wanted it. In the view of Cyril in his commentary on John, the words *greater than I* should be regarded as referring to the human condition of Christ, rather than to His very essence, which is in no respect different from that of the Father.[712] In his exegesis of the phrase, Cyril was clearly following one of the two main traditions adopted by the Orthodox Church. Sim-

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706 See Wiles (1960), pp. 122–125. For a survey of the patristic exegesis of this passage, see Westcott (1908), vol. 2, pp. 191–196 and Schnackenburg (1982 [vol. 3]), pp. 85–86.

707 Williams (2001), p. 109; Wiles (1960), p. 123. An anonymous treatise (*Praedestinatus* 3.9; PL 53.647), written around the middle of the fifth century, implies that Arius quoted John 14.28 in his works.

708 Athan. Anaz. PL 13.621A–B *non enim se erigit filius contra patrem neque putat parem esse cum deo, cedit autem patri suo et fatetur docens omnes quia pater maior, autem non vastitate neque magnitudine, quae quidem corporum propria sunt, sed perpetuitate et innarrabili eius paterna ac generandi virtute, et quia ipse quidem sempiternus est et in se plenitudinem habens et a nullo vitam habens* (*for the Son does not exalt himself against the Father, nor does he think that he is on equal terms with God; but he yields to his Father and confesses and teaches everybody that he* [the Father] *is greater than he, greater, not in extent nor in size, which of course are appropriate to bodies, but in eternity and in his indescribable paternal power and capacity to beget, and because he is himself eternal and has fulness in himself and derives his existence from nobody*). On the Arian character of the preserved fragments of Athanasius of Anazarbus, see Hanson (1988), pp. 41–44. The translation of Athanasius' passage on p. 42.

709 Eun. *Apol.* 11.9–12 Vaggione οὐδεὶς δ' οὕτως ἀνόητος καὶ πρὸς ἀσέβειαν τολμηρὸς ὥστε ἴσον εἰπεῖν τῷ πατρὶ τὸν υἱόν, αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου διαρρήδην εἰπόντος, "Ὁ πατήρ ὁ πέμψας με μείζων μου ἐστίν" (*but after all, there is no one so ignorant or so zealous for impiety as to say that the Son is equal to the Father! The Lord himself has expressly stated that "the Father who sent me is greater than I"*). See the relevant discussion in Behr (2004), pp. 273–281, Ayres (2004), pp. 204–207.

710 *Symb. Sirm.* ap. Athan. *De syn. Arim.* 28.7–8 *AW.*

711 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.518–519 Pusey.

712 Cf. Cyril, *Jo.* 2.517,29–518,3 Pusey μείζονα δέ φησιν αὐτὸν οὐχ ὅτι κεκάθικεν ἐκ δεξιῶν ὡς Θεὸς ἀλλ' ὡς ἦν ἔτι μεθ' ἡμῶν, τουτέστιν, ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς. Ὡς γὰρ ἔτι τὸ δουλοπρεπὲς ἔχων σχῆμα καὶ παρόντος αὐτῷ οὔπω τοῦ καιροῦ καθ' ὃν ἔδει ἀναλαβεῖν τὰ τοιαῦτά φησι (*he says that the Father is "greater" not because he has sat down at the right hand as God but because he was still with*

ilar explanations can also be found in the writings of Didymus the Blind,[713] Amphilochius of Iconium[714] and Ambrose.[715] The other, somewhat earlier tradition, which in the East can be traced back at least to Alexander of Alexandria, explains the word *greater* as relating simply to the Father's unbegottenness, the only property of the Father not shared by the Son.[716] This interpretation was adopted among others by Athanasius,[717] Basil the Great[718] and John Chrysostom.[719] Some of the Fathers, such as Cyril and Gregory of Nazianzus, used both explanations at various instances.[720]

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us, that is, in our condition. He says these things as one one who still has the appearance of a slave since the time had not yet come for him to be reinstated). A pro-Nicene author who gave this interpretation to the passage is Marcellus of Ancyra. See Hanson (1988), p. 836. For Marcellus and his insistence on the "oneness" of God and His essence, see DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz (2011), pp. 23–24.

713 Didymus, *Jo.* 17.14–17.

714 Amph. *fr.* 2.27–29.

715 Ambr. *De fide* 2.8,63 *nam quomodo potest minor esse deus, cum deus perfectus et plenus sit? Sed minor in natura hominis! Et miraris, si ex persona hominis patrem dixit maiorem, qui in persona hominis se uermem dixit esse, non hominem?* (*how, indeed, can He be a lesser God when He is perfect and true God? Yet in respect of His humanity He is less—and still you wonder that speaking in the person of a man He called the Father greater than Himself, when in the person of a man He called Himself a worm, and not a man?* H. de Romestin [tr.], *Writings of Ambrose. Exposition of the Christian Faith* [New York 1886]).

716 Alex. Al. ap. Theodoretus, *Hist. Ecc.* 22. See also Hanson (1988), pp. 484–485, 836, Behr (2004), p. 127.

717 Athan. *Contra Ar.* 1.58,6 *AW* διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς οὐκ εἴρηκεν· "ὁ πατήρ μου κρείττων μού ἐστιν", ἵνα μὴ ξένον τις τῆς ἐκείνου φύσεως αὐτὸν ὑπολάβοι· ἀλλὰ "μείζων" εἶπεν, οὐ μεγέθει τινὶ οὐδὲ χρόνῳ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς γέννησιν· πλὴν ὅτι καὶ ἐν τῷ εἰπεῖν "μείζων ἐστὶν" ἔδειξε πάλιν τῆς οὐσίας τὴν ἰδιότητα (*and hence it is that the Son too says not, "My Father is better than I" lest we should conceive Him to be foreign to His Nature, but "greater", not indeed in greatness, nor in time, but because of His generation from the Father Himself, nay, in saying "greater" He again shows that He is proper to His essence*; tr. NPNF 2.4,340).

718 Bas. *Adv. Eun.* 1.25 Weigel (PG 29.568,26–33) ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ ἀρχὴ τῷ υἱῷ, κατὰ τοῦτο μείζων ὁ πατήρ, ὡς αἴτιος καὶ ἀρχή. Διὸ καὶ ὁ Κύριος οὕτως εἶπεν· ὁ πατήρ μου μείζων μου ἐστί, καθὸ πατὴρ δηλονότι. Τὸ δὲ πατὴρ τί ἄλλο σημαίνει ἢ οὐχὶ τὸ αἰτία εἶναι καὶ ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεννηθέντος; (*since the Son's principle comes from the Father, it is in this sense that the Father is greater, as cause and principle. For this reason too the Lord said the following: "The Father is greater than I", clearly meaning insofar as he is Father. But what else does "Father" signify, other than that he is the cause and the principle of the one begotten from him?*; tr. Delcogliano and Radde-Gallwitz 2011).

719 John Chrys. homily 75 (on John 14.15–30), PG 59.408,22–24 εἰ δὲ λέγοι τις μείζονα εἶναι τὸν Πατέρα καθ' ὃ αἴτιος τοῦ Υἱοῦ, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἀντεροῦμεν. Ἀλλ' οὐ μὴν τοῦτο ἑτέρας εἶναι τὸν Υἱὸν οὐσίας ποιεῖ (*but, if someone should assert that the Father is "greater" in so far as He is the begetter of the Son, we shall not contradict this. However, this, to be sure, does not cause the Son to be of another substance*).

720 Apart from the explanation offered in his commentary on John, Cyril also discusses the

Thus, if Nonnus omitted the phrase on purpose, it was certainly not because of interpretative problems, as Cyril and the others clearly demonstrate the Orthodox way of understanding it. What remains, then, is the matter of the poet's independence from his patristic sources. There are passages in the *Paraphrase* in which Nonnus deliberately refrains from paraphrasing certain Johannine formulations, despite the fact that Cyril, whom he follows closely, does not omit them in his commentary. One of the most striking examples is that of the verses corresponding to John 4.22b in which the equivalent of the Johannine words *salvation is from the Jews* is absent. Since there seem to be no textual variations within the line offered by the text of the Gospel and the corresponding text of the *Paraphrase* is undoubtedly sound, the omission cannot be associated with the problems of textual transmission. Nor can it be explained by Cyril's lack of interest in the words, as his commentary explicitly relates them to Jesus himself, as David's descendant.[721]

Naturally enough, Cyril's interpretation of John 4.22b clearly follows the earlier Alexandrian tradition, which may have been well known to Nonnus from other sources. The word *salvation* is identified with Christ in Origen, too.[722] As a matter of fact, this interpretation was common also outside Alexandria and it can be found in Theodore of Mopsuestia[723] and Augustine,[724]

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passage in *Thes. de sanc. consub. Trin.* PG 75.141,51–54. Gregory mentions both interpretations in *De Filio* (*Or.* 30) 7 ἢ δῆλον ὅτι τὸ μεῖζον μέν ἐστι τῆς αἰτίας, τὸ δὲ ἴσον τῆς φύσεως; καὶ τοῦτο ὑπὸ πολλῆς εὐγνωμοσύνης ὁμολογοῦμεν ἡμεῖς. […] τὸ γὰρ δὴ λέγειν, ὅτι τοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον νοουμένου μείζων, ἀληθὲς μέν, οὐ μέγα δέ. τί γὰρ τὸ θαυμαστόν, εἰ μείζων ἀνθρώπου θεός; (*the Greater refers to origination, while the Equal belongs to the Nature; and this we acknowledge with much good will* […] *For to say that he is greater than the Son considered as man, is true indeed, but is no great thing. For what marvel is it if God is greater than man?* tr. NPNF 2.7,312). See also Nenci (2014), pp. 273–276, for more patristic passages on the subject.

721 Cyril, *Jo.* 1.276,13–17 Pusey διὰ τοῦτο Σαμαρείτας μὲν οὐκ εἰδέναι φησίν, ἐξεπίστασθαι δέ πως Ἰουδαίους, ἐξ ὧν καὶ ἀναδειχθήσεσθαι τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἑαυτὸν δηλονότι διισχυρίζεται. Ἀπὸ γὰρ σπέρματος Δαυεὶδ τὸ κατὰ σάρκα Χριστός, φυλῆς δὲ τῆς Ἰούδα γέγονεν ὁ Δαυείδ (*therefore, he says that the Samaritans do not know, but he maintains that the Jews in some ways know well and that from them salvation, namely himself, will be revealed. Christ is from the seed of David according to the flesh, and David came from the tribe of Judah*).

722 Origen, *Jo.* fr. 58 Preuschen ὅταν ἀκούσῃς ὅτι ἡ σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστίν, περὶ τοῦ ταῦτα λέγοντος ἄκουε τὰ εἰρημένα. Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἦν ἡ τῶν ἐθνῶν προσδοκία, ὁ γεννώμενος ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ κατὰ σάρκα.

723 Theod. Mops. *Jo.* 4.22 *and then he adds, "for salvation is from the Jews". He did not say "in the Jews" but "from the Jews". In fact, salvation was not in them but from them because Christ in flesh came from them*; tr. from the Syriac by M. Conti (Conti-Elowsky 2010, p. 42).

724 Aug. *sermo* 375.1 *unde natus est Christus? De Iudaeis. Sic habes scriptum, salus ex Iudaeis est: sed non solis Iudaeis. Non enim dixit, salus Iudaeis; sed, salus ex Iudaeis.*

among others.[725] It also occurs in the acts of the first Council of Ephesus.[726] A slightly different, yet generally similar, explanation of the words is offered by Chrysostom and his followers. According to this, John 4.22b refers both to the incarnated Saviour, and to the whole history of salvation before the appearance of Christ, that is, to the knowledge of the true God among the Jews.[727]

The issue of John 4.22b, passed over in silence in the *Paraphrase*, was recently addressed by M. Caprara.[728] She suggested that Nonnus decided not to paraphrase the words under Cyril's influence, as he followed the anti-Jewish attitude of the bishop.[729] However, in view of the fact that Cyril does not refrain from commenting on John 4.22b and that he shows no embarrassment about it, the direct influence of his commentary on Nonnus seems, in this particular case, much less certain and the omission should be regarded rather as the poet's independent choice. Looking at the omission in terms of Christian-Jewish polemic is worth doing. The history of Christian-Jewish encounters in Alexandria dates back to the time before Cyril was appointed to the bishopric. A good example is Athanasius' anti-Arian polemic in which the Arians go hand in hand not only with other heretics, but also with the Jews and the pagans, all united against Homoousian Christians.[730] What is even more inter-

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725 See, in general, De la Potterie (1983), pp. 83–84.

726 ACO 1.1,5,90 Schwartz.

727 John Chrys. homily 33 (on John 4.21–28), PG 59.189,38–46 ὁ δὲ λέγει, τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν· ἢ ὅτι τὰ ἀγαθὰ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ἐκεῖθεν γέγονε (τὸ γὰρ εἰδέναι Θεὸν καὶ τὸ καταγινώσκειν εἰδώλων ἐκεῖθεν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔσχεν· καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα δόγματα καὶ παρ' ὑμῖν δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς προσκυνήσεως, εἰ καὶ μὴ ὀρθῶς, ἀπὸ γοῦν τῶν Ἰουδαίων τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔλαβε)· σωτηρίαν οὖν ἢ ταῦτα ἢ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παρουσίαν καλεῖ· μᾶλλον δὲ οὐκ ἄν τις ἁμάρτοι ἀμφότερα ταῦτα σωτηρίαν καλῶν, ἣν εἶπεν ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων εἶναι (*what He meant is something like this: "The good things in the world have come from that source [for the knowledge of God and the renouncing of idols took their beginning from there, and also all the other teachings; and even among you the act of worship itself, though not carried out correctly, at least had its beginning from the Jews]". "Salvation", then, means either these things or His own coming; indeed, one would not err in calling both of these "salvation", since He said it was from the Jews*). See De la Potterie (1983), p. 83.

728 Caprara (1999) and (2005).

729 Caprara (1999), p. 203, and (2005), p. 226. This view was earlier expressed by Golega (1930, p. 119, n. 2). For Cyril's expulsion of the Jews from Alexandria, see further Tcherikover (1957), pp. 98–99, Aujoulat (1986), p. 5, Haas (1997), pp. 91–92.

730 Gwynn (2007), pp. 52–53. The Arian / Jewish alliance in Alexandria seems to be something more than only a story fabricated by Athanasius. For Tcherikover (1957, p. 97), "Jews … proffered assistance to any group of persons or to any social or religious movement in opposition to the official Church. Thus, they certainly supported the Arians, and the Fathers of the Church classed Jews and Arians together as the fiercest enemies of orthodoxy". See also Haas (1997), pp. 125–126. For the opposite view, see Gwynn (2007), p. 53, who considers Athanasius' charges against the Arians (including their alliance with the Jews) mostly as rhetorical *topoi*.

esting is that Athanasius calls the Arians the "Jews of the present day", equating their denial of the Son's unity of being with the Father with the Jews' rejection of Christ's divinity.[731] While speaking of Arians in his *De sententia Dionysii*, Athanasius emphasises that "both the Jews of the past and the new Jews of the present inherited their Christ-fighting mania from their father, the devil",[732] the devil as (some of) the Jews' murderous father being actually a Johannine statement.[733] Thus, in Athanasius' rhetoric, which continues John's thought in a generalising spirit,[734] the figure of the Jew embodies the enemy of Christ and of the entire Orthodox Church. A similar polemical attitude is adopted by Cyril, who blames the Jews for their persistent misinterpretation of the Scriptures and the Law, which leads them to the illegitimate cult practices and to the rejection of Christ.[735]

Given that Nonnus was closely bound up with the Alexandrian *milieu*,[736] and given, too, the negative image of the Jewish leaders and feasts in the *Paraphrase*,[737] it seems likely that the reason for the omission of John 4.22b was the effort to separate Christianity from Judaism as much as possible. This may perhaps be paralleled by *Par*. 2.70 and 11.223, where Nonnus speaks of the first and the third Johannine Passover omitting in both cases the words τῶν Ἰουδαίων, which John applies to the feasts. The purpose of this omission is, in all likelihood, the shift of the focus from the Jewish Passover to Christ's Passion.[738]

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731 Brakke (2001), pp. 467–477, esp. 471–472.

732 Athan. *Dion*. 3.3–4 *AW* ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ τότε Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ νέοι νῦν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἑαυτῶν τοῦ διαβόλου τὴν χριστομάχον ἐκληρώσαντο μανίαν; tr. D.M. Gwynn. See Gwynn (2007), p. 173. Cf. also Cf. Athanasius' *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae* 4.6–7 (PG 25.545 C). Athanasius speaks of heretics who try to convince people of the validity of their positions through elaboration of speech by means of the use of treacherous words, taught to them by devil, their father.

733 John 8.44 ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. Ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν (*you are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth*). For Nonnus' treatment of this Johannine passage and for the vocabulary with which he describes the unholiness and evilness of these Jews, see Rotondo (2017b), p. 217.

734 Jesus seems to mean that devil is the father of the Jews to whom He is speaking (cf. Schnackenburg 1980 [vol. 2], ad loc., p. 213: "the Jews he is addressing here are descended from the devil") and not of *all* the Jews indiscriminately.

735 Wilken (1971), pp. 60–63.

736 Livrea (1987), p. 440, Gigli Piccardi (1993).

737 See F. Doroszewski, "Judaic orgies and Christ's Bacchic deeds: Dionysiac terminology in Nonnus' Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel", in Spanoudakis (2014a), pp. 287–301.

738 See Livrea (2000), p. 250; Greco (2004), p. 16. Cf. Origen *Jo*. 10.13,67–68 Blanc. Origen underlines the contrast between the Jewish Passover and the Passover of the Lord, refer-

Thus, if we consider the omission of John 4.22b in the *Paraphrase* as Nonnus' independent choice, there are grounds for supposing that this might also be the case with regard to the equivalent of the words "the Father is greater than I" absent from *Par.* 14.108–114. Nonnus, presumably tied to the cultural milieu of Alexandria where the Arian heresy had grown, might have decided to omit the words so vigorously discussed by both Arians and their opponents. Naturally, there can be no certainty about the truth of this supposition and the lacuna must be still regarded as a competitive explanation.

H.2.a.ii Par. *10.103–107, μείζων πάντων and the Unity of the Persons of the Trinity*

Par. **10.103–107**	**John 10.28–30**
οὐδέ τις ἁρπάξειεν ἐμὴν πινυτόφρονα ποίμνην χειρὸς ἀφ' ἡμετέρης, γενέτης ἐμὸς ὅττι νομεύειν ὅς μοι πώεα δῶκεν ὑπέρτερος ἔπλετο πάντων. Αὐτὸς ἐγὼ μεδέων τε πατὴρ ἐμὸς ἓν γένος ἐσμέν, ἔμφυτον, αὐτόπρεμνον, ὅθεν φυτὰ μυρία κόσμου.	καὶ οὐχ ἁρπάσει τις αὐτὰ ἐκ τῆς χειρός μου. Ὁ πατήρ μου ὃς ἔδωκέν μοι πάντων μείζων ἐστιν, καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται ἁρπάζειν ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ πατρός. Ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἕν ἐσμεν.
"Nor could anyone plunder my prudent-minded drove out of my hand, because my begetter, who gave me these flocks to tend, is superior to all. I myself and my ruling Father are one genus, intertwined, sharing the same root, whence the countless plants of the world [derive]".	"and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one".

Another passage which can be paralleled with that discussed above is *Par.* 10.103–107. The passage corresponds to John 10.29–30, the lines which played even greater role in the Arian controversy, also at the early stages of its develop-

ring exactly to the words τὸ Πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων of John 2.13. See also ibid. 28.25,224–225 on John 11.55. Similar are the views that Athanasius expresses in his *Festal Letters*, surviving in Syriac and Coptic versions. In these letters, Athanasius sees the Jewish Easter as a "shadow" of the Christian Easter, which is spiritual and universal, in contrast to its forebear. See Brakke (2001), pp. 453–454, 461–462 and *passim*.

ment, than John 14.28.[739] In John 10.29–30 Jesus calls—according to the various readings—[740] the Father or the gift received from the Father (according to the reading ὃ δέδωκέν μοι πάντων μεῖζόν ἐστιν) *greater than all*, before declaring that the two (Jesus and the Father) are *one*. Nonnus paraphrases the word *greater* with its poetic synonym ὑπέρτερος, which he relates directly to the Father. Thus, in Nonnus' reading of John 10.29, in *Par.* 103–105, it is the Father, the giver of sheep to Jesus, who is greater than all else. In the following two verses (*Par.* 10.106–107), the poet elaborates on the short line John 10.30 expanding it with a number of words that highlight the unity of the two persons of the Trinity.[741]

Nonnus' first important addition is the word γένος, by means of which the poet reminds the reader that the oneness of Jesus and the Father is derived from the fact that they are truly of the same family—it is Jesus' quality of being the Son that creates Jesus' oneness with the Father. In order to show both the intimate and indivisible character of this relation and the unity of action which follows it, Nonnus uses a plant metaphor. The γένος of the Father and the Son is ἔμφυτον, "implanted together", and αὐτόπρεμνον, "growing out of the same root", and all that exists has sprung from it. Thus the assertion that the Father is greater than all made in *Par.* 10.103–105 is immediately balanced in the following lines by the image of Jesus having an equal share in the very nature and creative power of the Father.[742]

Here Nonnus clearly follows in the footsteps of those theologians who interpret John 10.29–30 as an argument for the Son's oneness of essence and power with the Father. Athanasius' explanation of John 10.30 (a passage to which Athanasius constantly refers in his writings),[743] emphasises the oneness of being of the Father and the Son, which is followed by the unity of their action, in opposition to the Arians who understood the text in terms of the unity of will only.[744] The unity of being and power is also John Chrysostom's and Cyril's main concern in their commentaries to John 10.29–30. John Chrysostom explains that the Father's hand protecting the sheep in 10.29 and the Son's hand mentioned in 10.28 are actually one because of the unity of Father's and Son's power. And if the power of the Father and the Son is one, he continues, their essence is

739 See Pollard (1957), pp. 339–344.

740 See, for instance, Barrett (1978), pp. 381–382.

741 De Stefani (2002), p. 106.

742 *Contra*, Sieber (2016, p. 316), who suggests that in the passage under discussion "the unity evoked … is nuanced", and that "Father and the Son … [are] far from being indistinguishable".

743 Pollard (1970), p. 191, n. 3.

744 Pollard (1957), pp. 341–342.

also one.[745] Similarly, Cyril refers to the scriptural meaning of the word *hand* to demonstrate that it should be related to Christ's power and, at the same time, to the fact that Christ is the right hand of the Father.[746] The two arguments, advanced by Cyril and John Chrysostom, clearly prove the Father and Son's oneness of action and their equality of nature, thus also proving that John 10.30 cannot be understood in terms of the unity of will only, as the Arians wanted it. Significantly, the term ἔμφυτος used by Nonnus in *Par.* 10.107, which also occurs in the Prologue of the *Paraphrase* (*Par.* 1.9), with reference to the life-giving power innate in the Word,[747] can be also found in Cyril's commentary to John 1.4, where it is related to the unity of being between Father and Son: οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ὡς Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, ὡς *ἔμφυτος*, ὡς ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ, ὡς Μονογενής.[748]

H.2.a.iii *Ἀγχίθρονος*

Par. **7.152–153**	**John 7.39**
οὔπω γὰρ βροτέῃσιν ἐνερρίζωτο μενοιναῖς ------- Χριστὸς ἄναξ γενέταο φανεὶς ἀγχίθρονος ἕδρης. For in mortal hearts [...] had not yet taken root ------- Christ the Lord, appearing near the throne of His begetter's seat.	οὔπω γὰρ ἦν πνεῦμα δεδομένον, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὔπω ἐδοξάσθη. for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This is a short segment taken from Jesus' statement on the last day of the feast of the Tabernacles, with Jesus presented as the source of living water. John comments that with these words Jesus made an allusion to the Spirit, because the Spirit was not yet sent to mankind, as Jesus was not yet glorified. The appearance of the extremely rare adjective ἀγχίθρονος, describing Christ and occurring only in this passage and in one of Cyril's works, the *Epistulae*

745 John Chrys. homily 61 on John (PG 59.338).

746 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.253–254 Pusey.

747 De Stefani (2002), p. 114.

748 Cyril, *Jo.* 1.46,9–10 Pusey (*he was with God as a Son with the Father, as innate, from his substance and only begotten*).

Paschales,[749] suggests that it may be an echo of Cyril's use of the word, although the whole expression γενέταο ἀγχίθρονος ἕδρης openly rephrases the statement of the formulation in the Creed in the Council of Constantinople, where Christ is described as sitting at the right hand of the Father: καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρός.[750]

A similar example of the influence of the Creed on the re-elaboration of the Gospel is visible in the opening verses of the first Book of the *Paraphrase*, where Nonnus inserts adjectives characterised by complex theological implications exhaustively analysed by De Stefani[751] to amplify the *incipit* of the Gospel. Here the Son is also together with the Father on His throne:[752]

***Par.* 1.3–5**	**John 1.1**
καὶ λόγος αὐτοφύτοιο θεοῦ γόνος, *ἐκ φάεος φῶς·* πατρὸς ἔην ἀμέριστος, *ἀτέρμονι σύνθρονος ἕδρῃ·* καὶ θεὸς ὑψιγένεθλος ἔην λόγος.	καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
and the Word was the light of self-begotten God, light from light; from the Father He was indivisible, seated on the same throne in the boundless abode; and the Word born on high was God.	and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The phrase ἐκ φάεος φῶς is a clear *variatio* on the formulation in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed φῶς ἐκ φωτός[753] and the image of the Father and the Son sitting together on a throne (ἀτέρμονι σύνθρονος ἕδρῃ) echoes again the Creed's καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρός.

749 *Epistulae Paschales sive Homiliae Paschales* (Epist. 1–30), PG 77.888,35–38: ἀλλ' ἦν ἀναγκαῖον ἀγχίθρονον ἔχοντας τῆς ἑορτῆς τὸν καιρὸν προαποσμήχεσθαι ῥύπους τοὺς ἀπό γετῶν διεπταισμένων καὶ ἀποτρίβεσθαι μολυσμοὺς ψυχικούς τε καὶ σωματικούς.

750 For the text of the Creed, see Alberigo et al. (2006), p. 57.

751 For a full discussion of the theological and poetic background of the terms employed by Nonnus in the first five lines of the *Paraphrase*, see De Stefani (2002), pp. 103–110.

752 On the image of the Son and the Father sitting on the throne, see further De Stefani (2002), p. 109.

753 Cf. Alberigo et al. (2006), p. 19 (for the text of the Creed of Nicaea, A.D. 325) and p. 57 (for the text of the Creed of Constantinople, A.D. 381). See also De Stefani (2002), p. 108.

H.2.a.iv Par. *10.136–138: ἀγχιφανής, ἀμέριστος, ὁμόζυγος*

Par. 10.136–138	John 10.38
ὄφρα κε γινώσκοιτε θεοπνεύστῳ τινὶ μύθῳ, ὡς ἐν ἐμοὶ τελέθει γενέτης ἐμὸς ὅττι καὶ αὐτός ἀγχιφανής, ἀμέριστος, ὁμόζυγός εἰμι τοκῆος. "in order that you know by a God-inspired word that in me is my begetter, because I myself appear near Him, and I am indivisible and yoked together with my parent".	ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ γινώσκητε ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατὴρ κἀγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρί. that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

The idea of the unity of being recurs in another passage of the same Book, *Par.* 10.136–138, corresponding to John 10.38. In rendering the Johannine phrase ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατὴρ κἀγὼ εν τῷ πατρί, Nonnus applies the adjectives ἀγχιφανής, ἀμέριστος and ὁμόζυγος to the Son, to describe the relation between Father and Son. The first adjective, a neologism created by Nonnus,[754] underlines the real intimacy between the two Persons. The next adjective, ἀμέριστος, perhaps conveys Neoplatonic overtones.[755] Nevertheless, it also appears in the writings of Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa, where it is laden with profound theological meaning in reference to the inseparability of the Father and the Incarnate Son.[756] Cyril also uses the word in his commentary on John. A typical example of Cyril's use of the word is a remark on John 1.34, where Cyril speaks of the Son as προελθόντα ἀμερίστως καὶ ἀδιαστάτως from the Father (*proceeding from him indivisibly and without distance*, 1.190,27 Pusey). It is precisely in this context that it should be understood at *Par.* 10.138 and also at *Par.* 1.4 πατρὸς ἔην ἀμέριστος and 14.47 συζυγίην ἀμέριστον. Given the context of *Par.* 10.137–138 and Gregory of Nazianzus' description of Arianism as τεμὼν ἀνίσως τὴν ἀμέριστον οὐσίαν (*Carm.* 2.1.11,581), the term seems to convey intense anti-Arian overtones here.[757]

754 Livrea (1989), p. 135; Accorinti (1996), p. 139; De Stefani (2002), p. 153; Greco (2004), p. 140; Caprara (2005), p. 239.
755 See Franchi (2016), p. 246.
756 See Lampe (1961), s.v.
757 De Stefani (2002), p. 108. The notion of the absence of division (ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως) in the two natures of Christ, which reflects also the inseparability of the persons of the

Ὁμόζυγος is a term of Platonic origin and in the *Paraphrase* usually points to an *unio mystica*. In this case, ὁμόζυγος, like ἀγχιφανής and ἀμέριστος, clearly refers to the unity of being shared by Son and Father.[758] There is also reference to the dogma of the ὁμοουσία here.[759] *Par.* 18.113 sheds light on the compound of ζυγός: χεῖρας ὀπισθοτόνῳ πεπεδημένον δίζυγι δεσμῷ. Livrea suggests that the expression δίζυγι δεσμῷ may have a theological aspect, alluding to the unity of the two natures of Christ: "… prefigurando antitipicamente l'unione ipostatica delle due nature in Cristo".[760] This agrees with another passage concerning the Passion of Christ. In commenting on *Par.* 19.97 (ποσσὶν ὁμοπλεκέεσσιν, ἀκαμπέα δεσμὸν ὀλέθρου), Livrea and Accorinti suggest that the image of the intertwined feet is an allusion to the indissolubility of the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ, in accordance with the doctrines of Cyril of Alexandria, and perhaps anticipating the conclusions of the Council of Chalcedon.[761]

Thus, in his rendition of John 10.38, Nonnus insists that the unity with the Father, reflected in Jesus' actions, is a unity of essence. This interpretation agrees with that of the Fathers. For Athanasius, Jesus' visible works prove His invisible consubstantiality with the Father.[762] Gregory of Nyssa refers to John 10.38 in his refutation of those who deny the Son's consubstantiality with the Father.[763] Much like Athanasius, John Chrysostom says that Jesus' works make the disciples aware of their Master's invisible essence.[764] This is also the point of Cyril's comment on the same verse.[765] Significantly, the passage which corres-

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Trinity, is a basic Orthodox doctrine, further elaborated in the Council of Chalcedon. See Schaff (1931), pp. 31–32.

758 Livrea (1989), p. 121 and (2000), pp. 191–192.

759 Ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί in the text of the Creed of the Council of Constantinople of 381: see Alberigo et al. (2006), p. 57. On the meaning of *homoousios* in the Nicene creed, see, for instance, Bouyer (1941–1942), Lebon (1952), id. (1953).

760 Livrea (1989), p. 165.

761 See Livrea and Accorinti (1988), p. 269, n. 39: "Se si accetta la cronologia nonniana proposta da Livrea, che situa la composizione della *Par.* tra 444 e 451, sembrerebbe che qui Nonno anticipi le conclusioni di Calcedonia, il concilio che nel 451 avrebbe proclamato l'unità nella distinzione delle due nature in Cristo". For Livrea and Accorinti's reading of Nonnus' elaboration of the Crucifixion, see also above, *1. Specific Features of Mary, Jesus and Details of the Passion, d. Details of the Crucifixion. Jesus and Peter*.

762 Athan. *De Inc.* 18.1–3 (C. Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation du verbe*. Sources chrétiennes 199, Paris 1973). See also Pollard (1970), pp. 191, 208, 224. For Athanasius' defence of the ὁμοούσιον, see, for instance, Bouyer (1941–1942), esp. pp. 54–58, Lebon (1952), esp. pp. 496–498, 502–529, Behr (2004), pp. 232–233, Ayres (2004), pp. 140–144.

763 Greg. Nyss. *Contra Eun.* 2.1,51 Jaeger.

764 John Chrys. *Jo.* PG 59.339.

765 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.260,24–261,8 Pusey ἐπειδὴ τὸ εἰπεῖν τινα Πατέρα τὸν Θεὸν εὐχερές· τὸ μέν τοι δεῖξαι δι' ἔργων τοῦτο, δυσχερὲς καὶ ἀδύνατον τῇ κτίσει· δι' ὧν κατορθῶ, φησί, θεοπρεπῶς, ἴσος φαί-

ponds to this Gospel verse in John Chrysostom's homily 61 (on John 10.22–42) contains a theological explanation insisting that the Father and the Son are of the same substance.[766]

H.2.a.v *The Father's and the Son's τιμή*

Par. **14.2–3**	**John 14.1**
θεῷ καὶ ἐμοὶ πιστεύσατε· θεσπεσίην δέ υἱέι καὶ γενετῆρι μίαν ξυνώσατε τιμήν.	πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεόν, καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε.
but believe in God and me; one divine honor give in common to the Son and the begetter.	Believe in God; believe also in me.

At the beginning of the fourteenth Book, at *Par.* 14.2–3, Nonnus expands John 14.1b with a significant phrase: θεσπεσίην δὲ / υἱέι καὶ γενετῆρι μίαν ξυνώσατε

νομαι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρί· καὶ οὐδεμία ὑμῖν ἀπολογία ἀπιστοῦσι, τῇ πείρᾳ μαθοῦσιν ὅτι ἴσος εἰμὶ τῷ Πατρὶ δι' ὧν ποιῶ θεοπρεπῶν ἔργων, εἰ καὶ διὰ τὴν σάρκα ἔδοξά τις εἶναι παρ' ὑμῖν, ὡς εἷς τῶν πολλῶν. Ἐντεῦθεν δυνατὸν ἐννοεῖν ὅτι "Ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί". Ἡ γὰρ τῆς οὐσίας ταυτότης τὸν Πατέρα ἐν Υἱῷ καὶ τὸν Υἱὸν ἐν Πατρὶ εἶναι καὶ ὁρᾶσθαι ποιεῖ (*it is easy to call God "Father", but it is difficult, even impossible, for a creature to prove it through actions. Therefore, by the God-befitting works that I perform, he says, I show myself equal to God the Father. There is no defense for your unbelief since you have learned by experience that I am equal to the Father by the God-befitting works that I do, even though because of the flesh, I appear to be one of you, just one among many. From these works, one can recognise that "I am in the Father and the Father is in me". The identity of substance makes the Father to be in and to be seen in the Son, and the Son in the Father*).

766 PG 59.339,26–38 ὁρᾷς πῶς τοῦτο ὅπερ εἶπον κατασκευάζει, ὅτι εἰς οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐλάττων αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ πανταχοῦ ἴσος; Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ ἰδεῖν ἀμήχανον ἦν ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ἔργων ἰσότητός τε καὶ ταυτότητος τὴν ἀπόδειξιν τῆς κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν ἀπαραλλαξίας παρέχεται. [...] Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ἐγὼ ἢ ὅπερ ὁ Πατὴρ μένων Υἱός· οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐκεῖνος, ἢ ὅπερ ἐγὼ μένων Πατήρ. Κἂν ἐμὲ γνῷ τις, τὸν Πατέρα ἔγνω, καὶ τὸν Υἱὸν ἔμαθεν. Εἰ δὲ ἐλάττονα ἦν τὰ τῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ τὰ τῆς γνώσεως διέψευστο. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔστιν ἄλλην δι' ἄλλης οὔτε οὐσίαν οὔτε δύναμιν μαθεῖν (*Do you perceive how, as I have said, He was establishing the idea that He is in no respect inferior to the Father, but equal in every respect? Since it was not possible to see His substance, by means of the sameness and identity of Their works He furnished proof of the equality of Their power* [...] *For I am nothing else than what the Father is, though still remaining the Son. He is nothing else than what I am, though still remaining the Father. If a person knows Me, he knows the Father, also, and has gained knowledge of the Son. But, if the power* [*of either one*] *were inferior, then what concerns the knowledge of Him would also be false. For it is not possible to gain knowledge of one substance or power by means of another*).

τιμήν. The word τιμή corresponds both here and elsewhere in the poem to the Johannine δόξα[767] and the expression "one divine honour" undoubtedly refers to the mutual glorification of the Son and the Father.[768] However, the phrase should also be seen in the context of the Trinitarian controversies which centred on the equality of glory between Father and Son. An early example occurs in Alexander's of Alexandria letter to Alexander of Byzantium, in which the writer deplores Arius' neglect of the passages of the Bible that speak of the Son's παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ δόξης ἀλέκτου.[769] The question of the honour due to the individual persons of the Trinity held an important place in the teachings of Eunomius. According to his doctrine on the Trinity, honour is due first to the unbegotten God, in view of the First Person's primacy over Christ and the Spirit.[770] This view was vehemently opposed by the Orthodox theologians who insisted on the fact that the Son and the Spirit enjoy the same glory as the Father.[771]

This theological stance is also reflected in *Par*. 14.2–3, where Jesus urges the disciples to give *the same* honour to the Son and the Father. Yet once more, then, Nonnus seems to be following Cyril, who in his comment on John 14.1

767 Livrea (2000), p. 235.

768 See, for instance, Barrett (1978), p. 166.

769 Theodoretus, *Hist. Ecc*. 9.16.

770 Anatolios (2011), pp. 69–76, Scognamiglio (2011), pp. 62–63.

771 For instance, Greg. Nyss. *Contra Eun*. 3.3,30 Jaeger ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ φανερωθέντα θεὸν οὕτως τιμᾶν οἰόμεθα δεῖν καθὼς τιμᾶται ὁ πατήρ, τοῖς δὲ [sc. Eunomians] τὸ πάθος ἐμπόδιον γίνεται πρὸς τὸ δοξάζειν τὸν μονογενῆ θεὸν ἐπίσης τῷ γεγεννηκότι πατρί (*while we hold it necessary to honour, even as the Father is honoured, the God Who was manifested by the Cross, and they find the Passion a hindrance to glorifying the Only-begotten God equally with the Father that begat Him*; tr. NPNF 2.5,176), Bas. *Spir*. 6.15,31–37 Pruche ἀκουέτωσαν δὲ καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου σαφῶς ὁμότιμον ἑαυτοῦ τὴν δόξαν τῷ Πατρὶ παριστῶντος, ἐν τῷ λέγειν· "Ὁ ἑωρακὼς ἐμέ, ἑώρακε τὸν Πατέρα". Καὶ πάλιν· "Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ Υἱὸς ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Πατρός". Καὶ τό· "Ἵνα τιμῶσι τὸν Υἱὸν καθὼς τιμῶσι τὸν Πατέρα". Καὶ τό· "Ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς Μονογενοῦς παρὰ Πατρός" (*we ask them to listen to the Lord Himself, distinctly setting forth the equal dignity of His glory with the Father, in His words, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and again, "when the Son cometh in the glory of his Father"; that they "should honour the Son even as they honour the Father", and, "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father"*; tr. NPNF 2.8,9). Cf. also Bas. *Spir*. Pruche 17.43,13–18 τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ὁμοίως ἐκδέδοται. Ὡς τοίνυν ἔχει ὁ Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, οὕτω πρὸς τὸν Υἱὸν τὸ Πνεῦμα κατὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι παραδεδομένην τοῦ λόγου σύνταξιν. Εἰ δὲ τὸ Πνεῦμα τῷ Υἱῷ συντέτακται, ὁ δὲ Υἱὸς τῷ Πατρί, δηλονότι καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τῷ Πατρί (*the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is delivered in like manner, and, according to the co-ordination of words delivered in baptism, the relation of the Spirit to the Son is the same as that of the Son to the Father. And if the Spirit is co-ordinate with the Son, and the Son with the Father, it is obvious that the Spirit is also co-ordinate with the Father*; NPNF 2.8,27). Cf. also Greg. Nys. *Contra Eun*. 3.4,7 Jaeger, Bas. *Adv. Eun*. 1.26 Weigel.

remarks that each Person of the Trinity should be given the same measure of glory (δόξα).[772] Naturally enough, other Fathers commented on the line. In his *De Trinitate*, Ps. Didymus takes John 14.1, along with the words from Mark 8.38 ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ υἱὸς ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ (*when he comes in the glory of his Father*), as proof that the glory of the Son is equal to that of the Father.[773] Similarly, Hilary of Poitiers quotes John 14.1 to emphasise the unity of nature and honour shared by both Son and Father.[774] The equality of nature is also stressed in Augustine's comment on the verse.[775]

Another passage in which Nonnus elaborates on the Johannine text so as to convey the point that the Son has equality of honour with the Father is *Par.* 5.84–88,[776] which corresponds to John 5.23. The poet paraphrases the Johannine words ἵνα πάντες τιμῶσι τὸν υἱόν with the phrase ὄφρα κε πάντες / υἱέα τιμήσωσιν ἰσόζυγον ᾧ γενετῆρι (*in order that all / honor the Son as equal to the Father*, *Par.* 5.84–85), in which ἰσόζυγον deserves special attention. The expression ἰσόζυγον ᾧ γενετῆρι ("equal to his Father") is an exegetical remark explaining that Jesus deserves the same measure of honour as the Father because of the oneness of Their nature. Although the adjective ἰσόζυγος is an *unicum* in the *Paraphrase*, Nonnus makes use in three other passages of a synonymous form, ἰσόζυξ, each time to speak of the equality of the persons of the Trinity: at *Par.* 5.104 and 6.171 it reflects *il rapporto egalitario* between the Son and the Father,[777] while at *Par.* 14.71 it refers to the Spirit's relation to Jesus.

The Son's equality of honour with that of the Father and the oneness of Their nature is also the central theme of the Fathers' commentaries on John 5.23 (ἵνα πάντες τιμῶσι τὸν υἱὸν καθὼς τιμῶσι τὸν πατέρα. Ὁ μὴ τιμῶν τὸν υἱὸν οὐ τιμᾷ τὸν πατέρα, *that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him*). In his refutation of those who assert that the word καθώς used by the John should be interpreted as expressing mere likeness, rather than equality, in regard to the honour due to the Son, Cyril argues that, since Jesus' nature is equal to that of the Father, there can be no doubt that the second meaning of καθώς, equality, was intended.[778] For Chrysostom, the mention of Christ's authority as a judge at John 5.22 shows

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772 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.401,11–14 Pusey.

773 Ps. Didymus, *Trin.* 26.26–29.

774 Hil. Pict. *Trin.* 9.19.

775 Aug. *In Jo.* 67.1,10 *credite in Deum, et in eum credite cui natura est, non rapina, esse aequalem Deo.*

776 For a detailed commentary on the passage, see Agosti (2003), pp. 448–454. See also Nenci (2014), pp. 101–102.

777 Agosti (2003), p. 450.

778 Cyril, *Jo.* 1.335,8–336,25 Pusey.

the equality of power between Christ and Father, which in turn means that the Son should receive the same honour as the Father.[779] Basil the Great says that to refuse to worship the Son on the same footing as the Father, who is of the same nature and dignity, is inconsistent with Jesus' words at John 5.23.[780] Athanasius likewise uses John 5.23 to prove that the Persons of the Godhead, which is one, should be given one and the same honour.[781] Finally, Hilary of Poitiers argues that the honour of the Son is as inseparable from that of the Father, as the Son's nature is equal to that of the Father.[782]

At *Par.* 13.128–131, rendering John 13.31–32, Nonnus elaborates on the idea of the glory of the Son of Man, linked to the glory of the Father, adding to it the idea of the Father's self-begotteness.[783] At *Par.* 17.12–16, Nonnus elaborates

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779 John Chrys. homily 39 (on John 5.22–30), PG 59.220,40–44 ἵνα γὰρ μή, ἀκούων ὅτι αἴτιον ἔχει τὸν Πατέρα, παραλλαγὴν οὐσίας νομίσῃς καὶ τιμῆς ἐλάττωσιν, αὐτὸς ἔρχεταί σε κρίνων, τὴν ἰσότητα καὶ ἐντεῦθεν δεικνύς. Ὁ γὰρ ἔχων ἐξουσίαν κολάζειν καὶ τιμᾶν οὓς βούλεται, τὰ αὐτὰ δύναται τῷ Πατρί (*now, in order that you may not think, on hearing that He has the Father as cause, that He is different in some way in substance and inferior in dignity, He Himself comes to judge you, proving His equality to the Father also from that circumstance. Indeed, He who has power to punish and to honor whom He wills has the same powers as the Father*).

780 Bas. *Spir.* 6.15,59–63 Pruche εἰ δὲ ταῦτα οἰνοπλήκτων καὶ ἐκ φρενίτιδος παραφόρων τὸν νοῦν τὰ φαντάσματα, πῶς εὐσεβὲς τὸν τῇ φύσει, τῇ δόξῃ, τῷ ἀξιώματι συνημμένον μὴ μετὰ Πατρὸς προσκυνεῖν καὶ δοξάζειν τοὺς παρ' αὐτοῦ διδαχθέντας ὅτι· "Ὁ μὴ τιμῶν τὸν Υἱὸν οὐ τιμᾷ τὸν Πατέρα"; (*and if these are the imaginations of drunken delusion and phrensied insanity, can it be consistent with true religion for men taught by the Lord himself that "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father" to refuse to worship and glorify with the Father him who in nature, in glory, and in dignity is conjoined with him?*; tr. NPNF 2.8,10).

781 Athan. *Contra Ar.* 3.6,5–6 *AW* καὶ ὁ προσκυνῶν δὲ καὶ τιμῶν τὸν υἱὸν ἐν υἱῷ προσκυνεῖ καὶ τιμᾷ τὸν πατέρα. Μία γάρ ἐστιν ἡ θεότης. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μία τιμὴ καὶ μία ἐστὶ προσκύνησις ἡ ἐν υἱῷ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ γινομένη τῷ πατρί (*and he who worships and honours the Son, in the Son worships and honours the Father; for one is the Godhead; and therefore one the honour and one the worship which is paid to the Father in and through the Son*; tr. NPNF 2.4,397).

782 Hil. Pict. *Trin.* 9.23 *Et hic idem ipse sermo testis est nobis, in cuius exordio continetur: Vt omnes honorificent Filium, sicut honorificant Patrem. Qui non honorificat Filium, non honorificat Patrem qui misit illum. Numquam nisi naturalia exaequantur in honore, neque exaequatus honor separat honorandos. Cum sacramento tamen natiuitatis poscitur honoris aequalitas, cum Filius ita honorandus ut Pater sit. Et cum eius qui solus est Deus honor non quaeritur, non est extra solius Dei honorem, cuius honor idem adque unus et Dei est: quia ut non honorificans Filium non honorificet et Patrem, ita et solius Dei honorem non quaerens non quaerit et Christi. Inseparabilis itaque est a Dei honore honor Christi.*

783 Cf., in particular, *Par.* 13.128–129 νῦν πάις ἀνθρώπου φαεσίμβροτον ἔλλαχε τιμήν, / καὶ θεὸς αὐτογένεθλος ἐδέξατο κῦδος ἐν αὐτῷ (*now the child of man has obtained honor which shines onto mortals / and self-begotten God has received glory in Him*), rendering John 13.31 νῦν ἐδοξάσθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐδοξάσθη ἐν αὐτῷ (*now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him*). See the discussion of Scognamiglio (2011), pp. 62–63. See further below, *b. The Persons of the Trinity as Self-Begotten.*

again on the idea of the Son's glory. This passage is also relevant to the notion of the eternity of the Son's existence.[784]

H.2.a.vi Par. *14.31–48: σύννομος, σύζυγος, σύμφυτος*

Another important passage in which Nonnus elaborates on the Johannine text to highlight the idea of consubstantiality is *Par.* 14.31–48, which corresponds to John 14.9–11. The first significant addition is the phrase ἀθηήτοιο τοκῆος συμφυὲς ἔνθεον εἶδος (*Par.* 14.31–32), regarding the divine nature of Christ.[785] The divinity of Jesus is innate, συμφυής, with that of the invisible Father. The adjective is found in the same context in Basil of Caesarea,[786] and in Didymus the Blind.[787] It may also be intended evoke a cognate word, συμφυΐα, used in patristic writings to describe the oneness of nature within the Trinity.[788] Now, ἔμφυτος occurs in the Prologue of the *Paraphrase* (*Par.* 1.9), with reference to the life-giving power innate to the Word.[789] A few lines earlier (*Par.* 1.2), the Word is also described as ἰσοφυὴς γενετῆρος "of the same nature with the Father".[790] Other cognates of φύω echo the plant metaphor used in *Par.* 10.106–107, are applied by Nonnus to the relations within the Trinity and stress the unity of the Persons.[791] Such are συμφυής (*Par.* 14.32), σύμφυτος (*Par.* 14.44, 17.88) and αὐτόφυτος.[792]

At *Par.* 14.38, Nonnus puts into Christ's mouth the words σύζυγός εἰμι τοκῆος. This recalls the almost identical expression discussed above, ὁμόζυγός εἰμι τοκῆος (*Par.* 10.138), together with the theological significance it conveys. Moreover, the phrase can be paralleled with *Par.* 17.74 σύζυγες ἓν μόνον ἐσμὲν ἐν ἀλλήλοισιν ἐόντες and *Par.* 17.68 σύζυγες ἀλλήλοισιν ἀρηρότες, in which the derivatives of σύζυξ relate to the unity of being of Son and Father.[793] It can also be compared with a passage of Gregory of Nazianzus' *Carmina*: Γρηγόριος … συζυγέα

784 See below, *b. The Persons of the Trinity as Self-Begotten.*

785 De Stefani (2002), p. 106.

786 Bas. *Adv. Eun.* 2.15 Weigel (PG 29.601,30–31) τὴν ἐξ ἀϊδίου ὕπαρξιν, τὴν ἀπαθῆ γέννησιν, τὸ συμφυὲς τῷ πατρί (*the Son's existence from eternity. His begetting without passion. His connaturality with the Father*; tr. Delcogliano and Radde-Gallwitz 2011). See also Nenci (2014), pp. 152–153, Behr (2004), p. 293.

787 Didym. *Trin.* 1.30,10 ἐπέγνω δὲ τὸν συμφυᾶ καὶ συναΐδιον κλάδον τοῦ θεοῦ.

788 Lampe (1961), s.v.

789 De Stefani (2002), p. 114.

790 See Kuiper (1918), p. 238, De Stefani (2002), p. 106. Nonnus' use of the term ἰσοφυής was recently discussed in greater detail in Sieber (2015), pp. 334–344.

791 For which see above, *ii. Par.* 10.103–107, *μείζων πάντων and the Unity of the Persons of the Trinity*. See also the brief discussion of Rotondo (2014, p. 614) of terms and phrases such as ἰσοφυής, ἀμέριστος, ἓν γένος ἐσμέν.

792 For αὐτόφυτος (*Par.* 1.3), see below, *b. The Persons of the Trinity as Self-Begotten.*

793 Lampe (1961), s.v. See also Accorinti (1996), p. 143, Rotondo (2017c), pp. 51–52.

στομάτεσσιν ἐρευγόμενος θεότητα (PG 37.1497). Here, συζυγής, a variant of σύζυγος, refers to the union of the persons of the Trinity.[794] The poet continues to elaborate on the subject of consubstantiality in *Par.* 14.44 with the phrase σύμφυτός εἰμι τοκῆος that undoubtedly alludes to τοκῆος / συμφυὲς ἔνθεον εἶδος ἔχων, which has appeared a few lines earlier, at *Par.* 14.31–32, and which may refer to Jesus' words addressed to the Father at *Par.* 17.88 ἐγὼ δέ σε σύμφυτος ἔγνων. In the latter case, Nonnus' use of σύμφυτος stresses the fact that Jesus' cognition of the Father arises from Their unity of being. It is noteworthy that Cyril (1.69,8 Pusey) actually uses the adverb συμφυῶς to describe the consubstantiality of Father and Son, with reference to John 14.10 ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί (*I am in the Father and the Father is in me*).[795]

At the end of the passage in question, at *Par.* 14.47, Nonnus calls the two Persons συζυγίην ἀμέριστον ἐνὶ ζευχθεῖσαν ὀχῆι (*the indivisible union, yoked under one pole*), so taking once again the theme of Father and Son being "yoked together". The phrase depicts metaphorically the paradox of the Son's consubstantial unity with, and distinction from, the Father.[796] The cognate forms συζυγίην and ζευχθεῖσαν emphasise the indissolubility of the union. These forms evoke both adjectives σύζυξ and σύζυγος, used in the same context elsewhere in the poem, and with the term ἀμέριστον, which conveys the same theological meaning as *Par.* 10.138. As happens at *Par.* 10.135–138, Nonnus' main concern at *Par.* 14.45–48 is also to establish a link between Jesus' wise works (σοφοῖς ... ἔργοις ἡμετέροισιν) and His (the Son's) oneness with the Father. This conforms with the exegetical intent behind Nonnus' reworking of the whole passage, John 14.9–11, i.e. to leave readers in no doubt as to the fact that Jesus shares the divine nature of the invisible Father.

Arius and Alexander, during the course of their theological debate, may have discussed John 14.10.[797] This contains the words ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί ἐστιν and played an essential role in the later anti-Arian discourses. Not surprisingly, the way in which Nonnus elaborates on John 14.9–11 reflects the anti-subordinationist exegesis[798] of the pro-Nicene Fathers who insist that there is a unity of being between Father and Son. This exegesis goes back to Alexander of Alexandria who, in reaction to Arius' subordinationism, set forth the argument that, since Jesus-Logos is the creator of all things (cf. John 1.3), He himself can-

794 Lampe (1961), s.v.
795 See further Savelli (1998), p. 98.
796 Greco (2004), p. 167.
797 Williams (2001), p. 109.
798 De Stefani (2002), p. 16, n. 50.

not be created and must not be separated from the nature of the Father.[799] This belief is omnipresent in the Orthodox interpretations of John 14.9–11. In Athanasius' opinion, John 14.9–10 proves that Jesus is a perfect image of the Father, sharing all His attributes.[800] John Chrysostom, in commenting on John 14.9, remarks that although united, the Father and the Son must still be regarded as two distinct persons.[801] This is why, as Basil and Theodore of Mopsuestia observe, *seeing the Father* means recognising the Father in Jesus' goodness of will and invisible nature shared with the Father rather than in Jesus' human shape.[802] Basil also stresses that at John 14.9 Jesus' own words confirm that He and the Father enjoy equal dignity.[803] In commenting on the words ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί ἐστιν in John 14.10, Gregory of Nyssa rejects the notion

799 Anatolios (2011), pp. 80–81.

800 Athan. *Contra Ar.* 1.21,1–2 *AW* φέρε τοίνυν, ἴδωμεν τὰ τοῦ πατρός, ἵνα καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα ἐπιγνῶμεν, εἰ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν. Ἀΐδιός ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ, ἀθάνατος, δυνατός, φῶς, βασιλεύς, παντοκράτωρ, θεός, κύριος, κτίστης καὶ ποιητής. Ταῦτα εἶναι δεῖ ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, ἵνα ἀληθῶς "ὁ τὸν υἱὸν ἑωρακὼς ἑωρακὼς ᾖ τὸν πατέρα". Εἰ δὲ μὴ οὕτως ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὡς οἱ Ἀρειανοὶ φρονοῦσι γενητός ἐστι καὶ οὐκ ἀΐδιος ὁ υἱός, οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη τοῦ πατρὸς ἀληθὴς εἰκών, εἰ μὴ ἄρα λοιπὸν ἀπερυθριάσαντες εἴπωσιν, ὅτι καὶ τὸ εἰκόνα λέγεσθαι τὸν υἱὸν οὐχ ὁμοίας ἐστὶν οὐσίας γνώρισμα, ὄνομα δὲ μόνον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ (*proceed we then to consider the attributes of the Father, and we shall come to know whether this Image is really His. The Father is eternal, immortal, powerful, light, King, Sovereign, God, Lord, Creator, and Maker. These attributes must be in the Image, to make it true that he "that hath seen" the Son "hath seen the Father". If the Son be not all this, but, as the Arians consider, originate, and not eternal, this is not a true Image of the Father, unless indeed they give up shame, and go on to say, that the title of Image, given to the Son, is not a token of a similar essence, but His name only*; tr. NPNF 2.4,318). See also Anatolios (2011), pp. 105–106, 118.

801 John Chrys. homily 74 (on John 14.8–15), PG 59.400,60–401,5 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τοῦτό ἐστιν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ Πατὴρ μένων Υἱός, εἰκότως ἐν αὐτῷ δείκνυσι τὸν γεγεννηκότα. Εἶτα διαιρῶν τὰς ὑποστάσεις, φησίν· Ὁ ἑωρακὼς ἐμὲ ἑώρακε τὸν Πατέρα, ἵνα μή τις εἴπῃ ὅτι αὐτὸς Πατήρ, αὐτὸς Υἱός. Εἰ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ Πατὴρ οὐκ ἂν εἶπεν "Ὁ ἑωρακὼς ἐμὲ ἐκεῖνον ἑώρακε" (*for, since He is what the Father is, though He remains the Son, with good reason does He direct you to His Father in Himself. Next, to distinguish the Persons He said: "He who sees me sees also the Father," lest anyone might say that Father and Son are the same Person. For, if He were the Father, He would not have declared: "He who sees me, sees Him"*). For the distinction of person (πρόσωπον, ὑπόστασις) between Father and Son in the Cappadocians (Basil, Gregory Nazianzenus and Gregory of Nyssa), see, for instance, Lebon (1953), pp. 637–639, 657–671 and *passim*.

802 Bas. *Spir.* 8.21,1–5 Pruche "ὁ ἑωρακὼς ἐμὲ ἑώρακε τὸν Πατέρα", οὐ τὸν χαρακτῆρα οὐδὲ τὴν μορφήν· καθαρὰ γὰρ συνθέσεως ἡ θεία φύσις· ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τοῦ θελήματος, ὅπερ σύνδρομον ὂν τῇ οὐσίᾳ, ὅμοιον καὶ ἴσον, μᾶλλον δὲ ταὐτὸν ἐν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ θεωρεῖται (*"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; not the express image, nor yet the form, forthe divine nature does not admit of combination; but the goodness of the will, which, being concurrent with the essence, is beheld as like and equal, or rather the same, in the Father as in the Son*; tr. NPNF 2.8,14), Theodore Mops. *Jo.* fr. 124.

803 Bas. *Spir.* 6.15,31–33 Pruche.

that these words may suggest any difference in glory or essence between Son and Father.[804] Because of the perfect equality of essence, rather than because of any kind inferiority on the part of the Son, as Theodore and Cyril also remark, the words and works of Jesus differ in no respect from those of the Father.[805] Moreover, in his comment on John 14.11, Cyril stresses that Jesus could never have accomplished His work, if He had no share in the divine nature of the Father.[806] To stress this very correspondence between the Father's and the Son's works and "ways", Nonnus adds the phrase ἤθεσιν ἀντιτύποις at *Par.* 5.64.[807]

H.2.a.vii Par. *14.63: The Son and the Holy Spirit*

***Par.* 14.63**	**John 14.16**
Χριστῷ σύγγονον ἄλλον, ὁμοίιον, ἔμπεδον αἰεί ἀτρεκίης ὀχετηγόν.	ἄλλον παράκλητον
one born together with Christ, similar to Him, an always steadfast guide to certitude	another helper

The *Paraphrase* makes clear not only that the Son and the Father are one. It also stresses the equality between the Holy Spirit and the Son. In reworking John 14.16, where Jesus promises to send the Paraclete to the disciples, Nonnus calls the Spirit Χριστῷ σύγγονον ἄλλον, ὁμοίιον, ἔμπεδον αἰεί. Nonnus uses the adjective σύγγονον to indicate that the Third Person of the Trinity belongs to

804 Greg. Nyss. *Ref. Conf. Eun.* 28.4 Jaeger. Note the affirmation δι' ὧν ἁπάντων οὔτε δόξης οὔτε οὐσίας οὔτε ἄλλου τινὸς παραλλαγὴ ὑπονοεῖται ἐπὶ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ τοῖς ταύτας τὰς φωνὰς ὡς ἀληθινὰς δεξαμένοις (*in all which passages there is no hint given to those who receive these declarations as genuine, of any variation of glory, or of essence, or anything else, between the Father and the Son*; tr. NPNF 2.5,105).

805 Theodore Mops. *Jo.* fr. 125, Cyril, *Jo.* 2.428,29–429,12 Pusey.

806 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.432,23–25 Pusey διαῤῥήδην γὰρ ἐν τούτοις φησὶν ὡς οὐδ' ἂν ἐργάσαιτο, οὐδ' ἂν ἐξανύσαι πώποτε τὰ μόνῃ τῇ θείᾳ πρέποντα φύσει, μὴ οὐχὶ κατὰ φύσιν ὑπάρχων καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς (*he explicitly states in these words that he would never have performed or accomplished works fitting for the divine nature alone if he were not essentially of that nature*).

807 John 5.17 ὁ πατήρ μου ἕως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται, κἀγὼ ἐργάζομαι (*my Father is working until now, and I am working*) ~ *Par.* 5.63–64 εἰσέτι νῦν γενέτης ἐργάζεται ἠθάδι θεσμῷ, / ἤθεσιν ἀντιτύποις καὶ ἐγὼ πάις ἔργον ὑφαίνω (*my begetter still works in the world, as is His custom, / and I, the Son, weave my work in replicated ways*). See the discussion of Rotondo (2014), pp. 614–615 and 620–622.

the same family, as it were, as Christ, thereby refuting heretical notions that the Spirit is only a creature. Jesus and the Spirit, which is called πνεῦμα θεοῦ γενετῆρος a few lines later (*Par.* 14.67), are of the same family, just as the Father and the Son are said to form one γένος in *Par.* 10.106–107. Nonnus uses the term ὁμοίιον, which also occurs at *Par.* 5.81 with regard to the Son's relation with the Father,[808] to stress that Jesus and the Spirit are innate and that they also share the same divine nature. Thus the Spirit cannot be subordinate to the Son, as some heterodox wanted. At the same time, the adjective ὅμοιος, of which ὁμοίιον is an epic form, is often used by fourth century theologians with reference to the Son in relation to the Father.[809] Finally, the expression ἔμπεδον αἰεί must refer to the eternity of the Spirit, the property shared in equal measure by all persons of the Trinity, according to the Orthodox Faith. Thus Nonnus depicts the Spirit as a being separated from and yet akin to the Son, consubstantial and coeval with the Son and, in the general context of the poem, with the Father, too.

Discussion of the status of the Holy Spirit, largely ignored during the earliest stages of the fourth century Trinitarian controversies, began from around the middle of the century.[810] At the time, heterodox movements, such as Eunomians, *Tropici* or Macedonians, questioned the divinity of the Spirit, considering It to be a creature subordinate to the Son.[811] These movements were vehemently opposed by Athanasius and Basil of Caesarea, both of whom insisted on the full divinity of the Spirit.[812] In his *Letter to Serapion*, Athanasius declares that the Spirit's relation to the Son is identical with the Son's relation to the Father.[813] He also states that the Spirit takes an active part in the work of creation and

808 See further Agosti (2003), p. 447.

809 Lampe (1961), s.v.

810 Anatolios (2011), pp. 24–26.

811 Anatolios (2011), pp. 24–25.

812 Anatolios (2011), p. 25. For Basil's refutation of Eunomius' views, especially as regards the Holy Spirit, see also Behr (2004), pp. 265–266, 305–318, Ayres (2004), pp. 211–218, DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz (2011), pp. 16–18. See also Nenci (2014), pp. 189–189, on *Par.* 14.63 σύγγονον.

813 Athan. *Ep. Serap.* 1.21,3 *AW* ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ὤν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐστιν, οὐκ ἔστι κτίσμα, ἀλλ' ἴδιος τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς οὐσίας (τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ὑμεῖς προσποιεῖσθε λέγειν), οὕτως καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὁ υἱός ἐστιν, οὐ θέμις τοῖς κτίσμασι συντάσσειν οὐδὲ διαιρεῖν αὐτὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ λόγου καὶ ἀτελῆ τὴν τριάδα κατασκευάζειν (*for as the Son, who is in the Father and the Father in him, is not a creature but pertains to the essence of the Father* [*for this you also profess to say*]*; so also it is not lawful to rank with the creatures the Spirit who is in the Son, and the Son in him, nor to divide him from the Word and reduce the Triad to imperfection*; tr. C.R.B. Shapland, *The Letters of Saint Athanasius concerning the Holy Spirit* [London 1951]).

therefore must not be considered to be external to the Godhead of the Father.[814] According to Basil, since the Spirit is sent from God, It reveals the glory of Christ and the goodness of the Father and also offers worshipers the knowledge of the Godhead.[815]

The later Fathers continued to discuss the matter of the Holy Spirit. While commenting on John 14.16, John Chrysostom calls the Spirit distinct from and yet consubstantial with the Son. Chrysostom carefully tries to clarify matters regarding the essence of the Paraclete, in the hope of avoiding the confusion that gives rise to heresy.[816] On the other hand, Chrysostom speaks here of *τῆς οὐσίας τὴν συγγένειαν*, which is parallel to the use of *σύγγονον* by Nonnus at *Par.* 14.63 in relation to the Spirit. Similarly, in his comment on John 14.16, Cyril affirms that the Holy Spirit shares an oneness of essence with the other persons of the Trinity, despite the Spirit's separate personality.[817]

814 Athan. *Ep. Serap.* 1.25,4–5 *AW*.

815 Bas. *Spir.* 18.46,12–20, 18.47,14–19 Pruche ὅθεν μόνον ἀξίως δοξάζει τὸν Κύριον. "Ἐκεῖνος γὰρ ἐμὲ δοξάσει", φησίν, οὐχ ὡς ἡ κτίσις, ἀλλ' ὡς Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, τρανῶς ἐκφαῖνον ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἀλήθειαν· καὶ ὡς Πνεῦμα σοφίας, τὸν Χριστόν, τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμιν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ μεγέθει ἀποκάλυπτον. Καὶ ὡς Παράκλητος δὲ ἐν ἑαυτῷ χαρακτηρίζει τοῦ ἀποστείλαντος αὐτὸν Παρακλήτου τὴν ἀγαθότητα· καὶ ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ ἀξιώματι τὴν μεγαλωσύνην ἐμφαίνει τὴν τοῦ ὅθεν προῆλθεν. (...) Ὥστε ἐν ἑαυτῷ δείκνυσι τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Μονογενοῦς καὶ τοῖς ἀληθινοῖς προσκυνηταῖς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ γνῶσιν παρέχεται. Ἡ τοίνυν ὁδὸς τῆς θεογνωσίας ἐστὶν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς Πνεύματος διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς Υἱοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ἕνα Πατέρα (*hence He alone worthily glorifies the Lord, for, it is said, "He shall glorify me", not as the creature, but as "Spirit of truth", clearly shewing forth the truth in Himself, and, as Spirit of wisdom, in His own greatness revealing "Christ the Power of God and the wisdom of God". And as Paraclete He expresses in Himself the goodness of the Paraclete who sent Him, and in His own dignity manifests the majesty of Him from whom He proceeded* [...] *it results that in Himself He shows the glory of the Only begotten, and on true worshippers He in Himself bestows the knowledge of God. Thus the way of the knowledge of God lies from One Spirit through the One Son to the One Father*; tr. NPNF 2.9,29).

816 John Chrys. homily 75 on John (on John 14.15–30), PG 59.403,54–61 αἰσχυνθήτωσαν καὶ οἱ τὰ Σαβελλίου νοσοῦντες, καὶ οἱ περὶ τοῦ Πνεύματος οὐ τὴν προσήκουσαν δόξαν ἔχοντες. Καὶ γὰρ τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ λόγου τοῦτό ἐστιν, ὅτι τὰς ἐκ διαμέτρου ἑστώσας αἱρέσεις μιᾷ πληγῇ κατήνεγκε. Τῷ μὲν γὰρ εἰπεῖν, *Ἄλλον*, δείκνυσιν αὐτοῦ τῆς ὑποστάσεως τὴν διαφοράν· τῷ δὲ εἰπεῖν, *Παράκλητον*, τῆς οὐσίας τὴν συγγένειαν (*let those afflicted with the disease of Sabellius blush for shame, and likewise those who do not have the proper opinion of the Holy Spirit. And they should be discomfited, for the marvel of His statement is this: that with one blow it has felled heresies that teach doctrines diametrically opposite. For by saying "another" He showed His distinction of Person; and by saying "Advocate", He showed the sameness of Their essence*).

817 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.467,6–12 Pusey.

H.2.b The Persons of the Trinity as Self-Begotten

In the light of the emphasis placed in the Trinitarian controversies of the fourth century on the unbegottenness of the Father,[818] it may seem surprising that Nonnus repeatedly calls Him "self-begotten". There is an example of this at the very beginning of the *Paraphrase*, at *Par.* 1.3, where the poet speaks of the Logos as αὐτοφύτοιο θεοῦ γόνος.[819] Although the adjective αὐτόφυτος is an *unicum* in the *Paraphrase*, a synonymous word, αὐτογένεθλος, which occurs six times in the poem,[820] expresses the idea of self-generation, always with regard to God the Father. There are also other unusual terms in the poem: αὐτοτέλεστος, describing the Logos,[821] and αὐτόγονος, which Nonnus relates to both the Son and the Spirit.[822] It is worth noticing that, given the double meaning of the prefix αὐτο-, i.e., "same" and "self", the adjective αὐτόπρεμνον, at *Par.* 10.107,[823] for instance, can be translated both as "growing out of the same root" and as "self-rooted".[824] Presumably Nonnus had both meanings in mind here. Thus Nonnus sees the Father and the Son as inseparable, but independent beings.

Nonnus' inaccuracy in the application of the notion of self-begottenness to the unbegotten Father and to the Son, begotten by the Father, led Preller[825] to characterise the terms such as αὐτόγονος as *verba mendosa* of Gentile origin. However, although Preller was certainly right in associating the idea of a self-generating divinity with pagan thinkers,[826] he overlooked the fact that its influence was not exclusively limited to pagan circles. In fact, as has been shown by Whittaker, the idea of divine self-generation was widespread throughout the Roman Empire and occurs in Hellenistic Jewish, Gnostic, and Christian sources.[827] Christian authors were somewhat ambivalent towards the idea. On the one hand, Orthodox theologians deeply distrusted the concept of divine self-generation, firstly because it was popular in Gnostic circles[828] and secondly because of its possible associations with the heresy of Sabellianism.[829] Only a

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818 See *agen*[*n*]*ētos* in the subject index of Anatolios (2011).

819 De Stefani (2002) adopts Gerhard's correction and reads αὐτοφύτοιο θεοῦ φάος.

820 *Par.* 1.55, 4.109, 5.69, 8.137, 13.93,129.

821 *Par.* 1.39.

822 *Par.* 2.65 (with Livrea 2000 ad loc.), 3.35.

823 For which see above, *a. Relation Between the Persons of the Trinity, ii. Par.* 10.103–107, *μείζων πάντων and the Unity of the Persons of the Trinity.*

824 Lampe (1961), s.v.

825 Preller (1918), p. 136. See also De Stefani (2002), p. 107.

826 Versnel (1990), pp. 227–229. What is particularly interesting in the context of Nonnus' poetry is that the idea of the self-born god is typically Egyptian.

827 Whittaker (1975) and (1980).

828 Epiphanius at *Pan.* 1.287,11 Holl says that he Gnostics believe in Χριστὸν ἄλλον αὐτολόχευτον.

829 Whittaker (1975), pp. 207, 210–214.

few followers of the Nicene faith, such as Hilary of Poitiers and Marius Victorinus, used the terminology of self-generation in speaking of the Trinity.[830] On the other hand, such terminology occurs in several passages of late antique Christian poetry and also in fragments of pagan writings, mostly in verse, quoted by Christian authors who seek to show the similarity between pagan intuitions and the Christian doctrine of God. The source of this ambivalence undoubtedly lies in the difference between a theological treatise, in which a precise terminology and clear formulations are used to avoid misunderstandings, and a theological poem.

The most obvious example that Nonnus may have followed is Cyril's *Contra Julianum* in which two passages containing the terminology of self-generation are quoted. The first one is ascribed to Orpheus and speaks of God as αὐτογενής (1.35,16), while the second derives from Porphyry's *Historia Philosophiae* and describes the second principle as proceeding from God as αὐτογέννητος ὢν καὶ αὐτοπάτωρ (fr. 18.9 Nauck).[831] There is another example from the Alexandrian milieu at Pseudo-Didymus' *De Trinitate*, where two anonymous poetical quotations state that God is αὐτογένεθλος and τίκτων αὐτὸς ἑαυτόν (3.2,1) and that God αὐτολόχευτος / γίνεται, ἐξ ἕθεν αὐτὸς ἐὼν γενέτης τε καὶ υἱός (3.2,8).[832] Similar terms occur in the poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus and Synesius. In Gregory's *Carmina dogmatica*, God is said to be αὐτογένεθλος (35.4; PG 37.517), while in the *Carmina quae spectant ad alios* Apollo utters a prophecy in which Christ is called αὐτοπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ (PG 37.1571). In Synesius' hymns, Christ is addressed as follows: γόνε πατρὸς ἀφθέγκτου, ὠδὶς διά σέ (1.236–238).

As regards possible implications of Nonnus' application of the notion of the unbegottenness to the persons of the Trinity: for Arius and his followers, Asterius and Eusebius of Caesarea, the property of unbegottenness, which distinguishes the Father, was tantamount to the Father's absolute primacy over Christ.[833] In the view of Eunomius, unbegottenness also demonstrates a fundamental difference of essence between God and Christ: the unbegotten God, generated (γενόμενος) neither by himself nor by another,[834] cannot share his

830 Whittaker (1975), pp. 212, 225.

831 A. Nauck, *Porphyrii philosophi Platonici opuscula selecta* (Leipzig 1886^2, repr. Hildesheim 1963), pp. 4–16.

832 See also Tissi (2018), p. 39.

833 Anatolios (2011), p. 59.

834 Eun. *Apol.* 7.1–3 Vaggione εἷς τοίνυν κατά τε φυσικὴν ἔννοιαν καὶ κατὰ τὴν τῶν πατέρων διδασκαλίαν ἡμῖν ὡμολόγηται θεός, μήτε παρ' ἑαυτοῦ μήτε παρ' ἑτέρου γενόμενος (*it is in accordance, therefore, both with innate knowledge and the teaching of the fathers that we have made our confession that God is one, and that he was brought into being neither by his own action nor by that of any other*).

substance with begotten Son.[835] Given this, the terminology of self-generation in the *Paraphrase* would seem not to be mere poetical embellishment, in that it also has theological meaning.

Even if Preller (1918, 136) is displeased with the terms referring to God as self-begotten, at the same time he admits that Nonnus uses them so as to emphasise God's eternity. This is why Preller says that the poet is wrong *non re, sed vocabulis vitiosis*. God's self-begottennes occurs in other Christian and Jewish sources from the second century onwards and is related to His eternity. For instance, in *Tübingen Theosophy* this notion occurs repeatedly. At 42.1 we read αὐτὸς ἄναξ πάντων, αὐτόσπορος, αὐτογένεθλος. Cf. 13.14 αὐτοφυής, 21.1 αὐτοφανής, ἀλόχευτος, 48.1 θεὸν αὐτογένεθλον ἀείναον.[836] In the Sibylline corpus, the third *Oracle* says that God is αὐτοφυής (3.12), while fr. 1 describes Him as αὐτογενής and ἀγένητος at the same time (fr. 1.17).[837] Since in both cases eternal existence is also attributed to God,[838] the terms αὐτοφυής and αὐτογενής are certainly not meant to imply that there was a time when God did not exist. Moreover, since αὐτογενής is immediately followed by the word ἀγένητος, the terms are apparently synonyms. For the author of the text, the most important aspect of being self-born is that no one else or nothing else engenders one, i.e. one's existence has no beginning. The same idea can be found in the *Visio Dorothei* and in Synesius' hymns. In the *Visio Dorothei*, the eternal[839] God is said to be at once πανάτικτος (11) and αὐτοφυής (12).[840] In Synesius, God, who also is said to be unbegotten, is addressed as πάτερ αὐτοπάτωρ … ἀπάτωρ, υἱὲ σεαυτοῦ (1.146–148).[841] Since Nonnus, too, repeatedly stresses the eternal nature of God in the *Paraphrase*,[842] Preller's remark about the notion of self-generation applied to Him seems to be perfectly correct. As regards the similarity of terms in Nonnus, Gregory and in the *Theosophy*, it has been

835 Anatolios (2011), pp. 69–76. For Basil's refutation of Eunomius' views on the difference of substance between Father and Son, see, for instance, Lebon (1953), pp. 642–649, Behr (2004), pp. 282–305, Ayres (2004), pp. 204–208.

836 See further Tissi (2018), p. 193 (on *Tub. Theos.* 13.14) and pp. 280–281 (on *Tub. Theos.* 41.1).

837 Bauckham (2008), p. 251.

838 3.15 αἰώνιος; fr. 1.16 μόνος εἰς αἰῶνα καὶ ἐξ αἰῶνος ἐτύχθη.

839 11 ἀμβρόσιος; 15 αἰώνιος.

840 Hurst, Reverdin and Rudhardt (1984), p. 29: "l'adjectif πανάτικτος … signifie qu'il n'a point eu de commencement; l'adjectif αὐτοφυής a la même fonction; il enseigne de surcroît qu'il n'y a point de pouvoir créateur extérieur à Dieu".

841 For the corresponding concept of the Logos as ἀμήτωρ (*Par.* 1.2), see Sieber (2015), pp. 344–346.

842 *Par.* 1.6, 127, 202; 19.38; 20.142, *al.*

argued that this is the result of a common oracular milieu, given, moreover, that the notion of the ungbegotenness of the divinity was widespread in Late Antiquity.[843]

The epithets regarding self-generation which Nonnus uses of Christ seem to have a slightly different meaning, given that Nonnus underlines Christ's eternal existence[844] and His Sonhood, too.[845] The main stress, then, is on the equality of Son and Father. Jesus is called αὐτοτέλεστος (*Par.* 1.39) and αὐτόγονος (*Par.* 2.65). This is so, because the Son is co-eternal with the Father and also because the Son is in no respect inferior to the Father, albeit engendered by the Father. Perhaps, like Marius Victorinus, Nonnus is also alluding to the idea that the process of being born from the Father is, in fact, a spontaneous act of the pre-existing Logos.[846] Thus, Nonnus opposes heterodox views of Christ's nature, including the Arian formula ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν.[847] This seems to be how the adjective αὐτόγονος (*Par.* 3.35), relating to the Spirit, is to be understood, too: the Spirit, as proceeding from the Father, cannot be of a different nature from Him.

The idea that the Son pre-existed the world, associated also with the Son's eternal glory, is elaborated in *Par.* 17.12–16, where John's 17.5 καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σύ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ᾗ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί is rendered as

καὶ σύ με νῦν κύδαινε τεῇ, πάτερ, ἠθάδι τιμῇ,
ἣν παρά σοι πάρος εἶχον, ὅτε ζαθέῳ σέο μύθῳ
οὔπω κτιζομένοιο θεμείλια πήγνυτο κόσμου.
Οὔνομα σὸν κήρυξα παρ' ἀνδράσιν, οὓς ἀπὸ κόσμου
υἱέι σῷ παρέδωκας, ἀφεγγέος ὄμματι κόσμου.

You too, Father, glorify me now with the accustomed honor,
which in the past I had from you, when your divine word
had not yet fixed the foundations of the world, when it was being built.
I proclaimed your name among the men whom from the world
you delivered to your Son, the sun for the lightless world.

843 Gigli Piccardi (2012), § 41.
844 *Par.* 1.2, 3.70, 12.131, *al.*
845 *Par.* 1.2, 3, 202; 3.69–70; 20.142, *al.*
846 See Whittaker (1980), p. 176.
847 Livrea (2000), p. 246, Greco (2004), p. 132. On Arius' maxim "there was once when the Son was not", see Anatolios (2011), p. 18.

The idea that Jesus' glory pre-existed the world is already stated in the Gospel verse.[848] Nonnus nevertheless stresses emphatically here the Son's anteriority to the world, adding the image of the *creation* of the world, which Jesus' glory preceded. The Son's quality as Logos, as given at John 1.1–3, where everything is created through Him, πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (1.3), is echoed here in ζαθέῳ σέο μύθῳ / … θεμείλια πήγνυτο κόσμου, which actually repeats the idea of the *incipit* of John's Gospel by means of verbal *amplificatio* constructed from epic vocabulary. Once again, Cyril's work probably lies behind l. 14, since an indirect reference to the *Genesis* is made at the end of his comment to John 17.5 with the quotation of the *incipit* of John's Gospel.[849] Together with Christian exegesis, a reference to a pagan mythical motif exists in this passage which contains crucial doctrinal notions. The concept of the beginnings of the κτιζομένοιο world as described in l. 14, with the phrase θεμείλια πήγνυτο, recalls the Callimachean τετραέτης τὰ πρῶτα θεμείλια Φοῖβος ἔπηξε (*Apoll.* 58), which refers to Apollo's quality as κτίστης (worshiped with this title in certain places),[850] who loves founding cities: Φοῖβος γὰρ ἀεὶ πολίεσσι φιληδεῖ / κτιζομένῃσ' (56 f.).[851] In this passage of the *Paraphrase*, the ancient gods' and heroes' "partial" / "local" power to found cities[852] is transformed into the universal authority and ability of the one God, who is the Κτίστης *par excellence*,[853] to create the whole world.

848 Ridderbos (1997) on verse 5, p. 550: "it is the unique glory of the Son 'with' the Father of the Word that was 'with God', a glory antecedent to the power with which he was clothed as the Son of man by God when he descended from heaven". For the notion of the Son's pre-existence to the world in John, see also, for instance, Dodd (1953), pp. 260–261, Pollard (1970), pp. 268–271. For the eschatological dimensions of the enthroned Son of Man in the Old Testament and in other messianic literature, see the discussion of Fletcher-Louis (2015), pp. 193–203.

849 Cyril (*Jo.* 2.673,27 and 674,1–2 Pusey) refers to a προκόσμιον (*from before the world existed*) δόξαν of the Son. Also 2.677,28–678,1 Pusey. In a similar way, Nonnus does not avoid the triple repetion of the same term at *Par.* 1.27–29, as De Stefani pointed out, because of the importance of the term κόσμος in that context, too; see De Stefani (2002), p. 127.

850 See Williams (1978), on l. 57, κτιζομένῃσ'.

851 For the echo other Callimachean passages in Nonnus (in the *Dionysiaca*), see, for instance, Hollis (1976), pp. 142–146, Geisz (2016), p. 183, Acosta Hughes (2016), pp. 507–510. For one more instance of Callimachean influence on a memorable image of the *Paraphrase*, see above, *F. Handling of Speech* (*Direct / Indirect / Dialogue*), *5. Gestures accompanying the Direct Speech*.

852 A similar expression is also employed by Nonnus when he refers to the foundation of Thebes: *Dion.* 5.50 Κάδμος ἀπυργώτοιο θεμείλια πήγνυε Θήβης.

853 As God is very often described in Christian writings; for instance, in the works of Gregory of Nyssa against Eunomius: *Contra Eun.* 1.1,110, 3.1,54 Jaeger, *al.*; in Epiphanius (*Pan.* 3.380,35, 3.381,4, 3.391,17 Holl, *al.*), in Gregory of Nazianzus (PG 35.1076,39, 36.661,44, *al.*).

To sum up, the terminology of self-generation in the *Paraphrase* must be seen not as an expression of Nonnus' unorthodoxy, but rather as an indication that the language of late antique Christian poetry was not substantially different from the contemporary poetic-theological *koine*, in which such terminology is well attested.[854] In fact, Nonnus' use of such terminology is fully Orthodox, given that the poet exploits it to emphasise the complete equality of the persons of the Trinity. From this perspective, the notion of self-begottenness is completely consonant with the theological attitude towards the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit adopted by Nonnus in the *Paraphrase*.

Conclusions

The evidence gathered here proves that the attitude towards the Trinity adopted by Nonnus in his *Paraphrase* is fully consistent with Nicene Orthodoxy. The survey of the passages in which Nonnus elaborates on the nature of the three divine Persons and on the relations between them leaves no doubt that the poet seeks to show that the individual persons of the Trinity are distinct and yet inseparable from each other and are fully equal in terms of nature, power and glory. In order to portray the intimate relationship and unity between Father, Son and Spirit, Nonnus employs varied poetic imagery, involving, for example, the family or plants that grow from the same same root. A similar purpose is served by the use of the terminology of self-generation, as this stresses the complete equality within the triune Godhead. Thus Nonnus' view on the relations within the Trinity corresponds to that of the pro-Nicene Fathers who denied any of the inferiority and subordination within the Godhead that Arius and his followers discerned.[855]

H.3 *Other Notions*

H.3.a Eternity of Christian Joy

In the passage below, taken from the prophetic speech addressed by Christ to the disciples, where it is predicted that their pain will be turned into joy, the paraphrast adds the theme of the eternity of Christian joy (line 83), which is not explicit in the Gospel:

854 See Agosti (2003), pp. 429–430 where numerous references are given.

855 A different opinion is held by Sieber (2016, p. 325) who on the one hand admits that Nonnus' Christology cannot be called subordinationist, but on the other speaks of "a dependent relationship between Father and Logos-Son" and "between the Father and the Spirit" in the *Paraphrase*.

Par. 16.78–83	John 16.22
καὶ ὑμεῖς πρῶτα μὲν ἀγρύπνοισιν ἀμύξετε θυμὸν ἀνίαις· ἀλλά που ἀθρήσω πάλιν ὑμέας· ὑμετέρη δὲ γηθήσει κραδίη παλινάγρετος· ὀψιφανὲς δὲ χάρμα παρ’ ὑμείων ἀμετάτροπον οὔτις ἀμέρσει εἰς χρόνον οὐ λήγοντα.	καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν νῦν μὲν λύπην ἔχετε πάλιν δὲ ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς, καὶ χαρήσεται ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία, καὶ τὴν χαρὰν ὑμῶν οὐδεὶς αἴρει ἀφ’ ὑμῶν.
soon you too shall first lacerate your hearts with unsleeping grief; but somewhere I shall gaze upon you again; and your hearts will rejoice once more, recovered. This irreversible joy will appear later, and nobody shall deprive you of it unto never-ending time.	So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

The opposition between the suffering of the present time and the eternal joy of the afterlife is expressed through the contrasting terms θυμόν ἀμύσσειν and γηθέω and χάρμα. Θυμὸν ἀμύσσειν is the well-known Homeric unique phrase (*Il.* 1.243, here used of anger),[856] which describes graphically the tension of the soul's discomfort (Porphyry, *Qu. Hom. lib. i* 76,9–10 explaining ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀμυχὰς ποιήσεις, σπαράττων τὴν ψυχήν).[857] The phrase is used once more in the *Paraphrase* (rendering the Johannine σκανδαλίζει, 6.61), with regard to the unease and dismay felt by the disciples on hearing of the necessity of eating and drinking Christ's flesh and blood for the purpose of salvation (*Par.* 6.189), as explained by Jesus. The forthcoming bliss is also expressed in common Homeric terms, χάρμα elevating the common χαρά to the epic register (e.g., *Il.* 3.51, 6.82, 10.193, *al.*) and γηθήσει κραδίη likewise recalling the Homeric γήθησε δὲ θυμῷ (*Il.* 7.189), γηθήσειν κατὰ θυμόν (*Il.* 13.416). As regards the notion of an unfading χάρμα, here we might have an echo of Cyril's comment to this particular Gospel verse.[858] Of course, the idea of eternal happiness after the sorrows

856 Taken up by Callimachus (fr. 75.10, on the terror the oxen feel when they are about to be sacrificed) and Triphiodorus (471, on the anxiety of the Acheans hidden in the Wooden Horse, as they are listening to the voice of Helen calling their wives by their name).

857 A.R. Sodano, *Porphyrii quaestionum Homericarum liber I* (Naples 1970).

858 2.644,15–19 Pusey ἐρηρεισμένη τοιγαροῦν ἡ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ θυμηδία καὶ μάλα εἰκότως. Εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ θανάτῳ λελυπήμεθα τίς ἡμῶν ἀποστήσει τὴν χαρὰν εἰδότων ὅτι καὶ ζῇ καὶ μένει διηνεκῶς, τῶν

of this world, especially martyrdom, is frequent in theological writings.[859] The adjective ὀψιφανές is coinage of Nonnus. Elsewhere it is found only in the *Paraphrase*, at 7.49 and 20.91. At 20.92 it is also connected with the concept of joy and suggests the happiness of the apostles in seeing the resurrected Lord after a lengthy wait.[860] The function of the adjective in the present passage is similar. The second adjective employed by the poet, ἀμετάτροπον, is rare, occurring only once more in Nonnus (*Dionysiaca*) and often associated with the *Moirai*.[861] In this context, the adjective strengthens the idea that joy, although late in arriving, will be definite and immutable. The implacability of the pagan Μοῖρα, Fate, whose inflexibility leads to misfortune and hardship in previous Greek literature, is here partly reversed, as it is replaced with the immutability and certainty of the joy to come. The image of eternal Time emphasises the notion of irreversibility (l. 83).

H.3.b The Freedom of Choice

H.3.b.i *Christ's Freedom*

Par. **10.64–65**	**John 10.18**
ἀλλά μιν αὐτοκέλευστος ἑκὼν ἐθέλουσαν ὀπάσσω, ὄφρα λάβω μετὰ βαιὸν ἔχων αὐτάγρετον ἀλκήν.	ἐξουσίαν ἔχω θεῖναι αὐτὴν καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω πάλιν λαβεῖν αὐτήν.
But self-bidden and of my own accord I will gladly lay it down, so that I may receive it by exerting my own strength.	I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.

πνευματικῶν ἡμῖν ἀγαθῶν δοτήρ τε καὶ πρύτανις (*their joy in him, then, has a firm foundation, and for good reason. If we have grieved at his death, who will take from us our joy, since we know that he lives and abides forever as the prince who bestows all spiritual blessings to us?*).

859 Cf., for instance, Athan. *Hist. Ar.* 79.4,4–6 *AW* τοῖς δὲ ὑπομείνασι τὰς ὧδε θλίψεις, ὡς ἐκ χειμῶνος ναύταις εὔδιος λιμήν, ὡς ἀθληταῖς μετὰ τὸν ἀγῶνα στέφανος, οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς μεγάλη καὶ αἰώνιος χαρὰ καὶ εὐφροσύνη ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς γενήσεται (*but for them that endure tribulations here, as sailors reach a quiet haven after a storm, as wrestlers receive a crown after the combat, so these shall obtain great and eternal joy and delight in heaven*; tr. NPNF 2.4,300).

860 See Accorinti (1996), p. 201 (on *Par.* 20.91).

861 The adjective is linked to the Moirai at *Dion.* 38.218. Cf. Eus. *Prep. Ev.* 6.3,1, 6.3,2 and 6.3,5; Porph. *De philos. ex or.* 171.14, *Orph. H.* 59.17.

These lines insist on the concept of a power that emanates directly from Jesus, αὐτοκέλευστος ἑκών, literally "who operates by his own will", reinforced in the next line by the adjective αὐτάγρετον. Ἐθέλουσαν also refers to Jesus' soul, and the repetition of terms that designate willingness emphasises Christ's free, unconstrained and conscious offering of Himself. The employment of the epic adjective[862] in the Christian framework illustrates yet again Nonnus' exploitation of the Classical tradition, since the term conveys theological implications in the new context, emphasising the freedom of will, intrinsic in Christ's choice to be sacrificed for the sake of humanity. The same adjective, αὐτοκέλευστος, occurs with a theological connotation at *Par.* 18.26 (ἄτρομος, αὐτοκέλευστος ἀνέδραμε κῆπον ἐάσας, *shot up fearlessly, self-bidden, and left the garden*), where it is used of Jesus at the moment of His arrest and signifies His awareness of His mission and His willingness to complete it.[863] Another passage, in which Christ's voluntary death and general self-determination is once again emphasised, is *Par.* 19.160 θελήμονι δ' εἴκαθε πότμῳ, which renders the Johannine παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα (19.30). As Kuiper (1918, 243) observed, the adjective θελήμων, attributed to "death", πότμος, stresses Christ's αὐτεξουσία. In his comment on this Johannine verse, John Chrysostom underlines Christ's control over death.[864] The idea that Christ is deliberately offering Himself is, of course, Johannine.[865] It is not surprising that in John Chrysostom's homily 60 (on John 10.14–21), the idea that Christ's sacrifice is a voluntary act is stressed several times[866] and the same notion is focal in Cyril's Christology.[867] The idea is not restricted to the East.[868]

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862 Hom. *Od.* 16.148, Ap. Rh. 2.326, *H. Hom. Merc.* 474, 489.

863 See Livrea (1989), pp. 125–126.

864 PG 59.463,1–4 οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπειδὴ ἐξέπνευσεν, ἔκλινε τὴν κεφαλήν, ὅπερ ἐφ' ἡμῶν γίνεται· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἔκλινε τὴν κεφαλήν, τότε ἐξέπνευσε. Δι' ὧν πάντων ἐδήλωσεν ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς ὅτι τοῦ παντὸς Κύριος αὐτὸς ἦν (*it was not when He had expired that He bowed His head, as is the case with us, but, after He bowed His Head, He then expired. By all these details the Evangelist made it clear that Christ Himself is Lord of all*). See Accorinti (1987), pp. 121–122.

865 See, for instance, Dodd (1953), p. 368.

866 Hom. 85, PG 59.330,19–331,10 καὶ μετὰ τούτου δὲ καὶ ἐκεῖνο κατασκευάσαι βούλεται, ὅτι τε οὐκ ἄκων ἐπὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἔρχεται (*in addition to this, He wished also to establish the point that it was not unwillingly that He went to His death*), […] οὕτως ἐξουσίαν ἔχω θεῖναι, ὡς μηδένα δυνηθῆναι ἄκοντος ἐμοῦ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι (*I have the power to lay it down in the sense that no one can take my life, if I do not will it*), […] *Οὐδεὶς αὐτὴν αἴρει ἀπ' ἐμοῦ*. Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀληθὲς κἀκεῖνο ἕπεται, τὸ ἑκόντα ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἔρχεσθαι (*"no one takes it from me". But, if this is true, it also follows that He went willingly to His death*), […] *Διὰ τοῦτό με ὁ Πατὴρ ἀγαπᾷ*, τὴν ἑκούσιον ἐδήλωσεν ὁρμὴν καὶ τὴν τῆς ἐναντιότητος ἀνεῖλεν ὑπόνοιαν (*"For this reason the Father loves me", He was making it clear that He willed the attack on His life and was removing the suspicion of His coming in opposition to the Father*).

867 Liébaert (1951), pp. 196–210.

868 For Pope Gregory I, too (sixth century), to take an example, Christ's obedience to the Father is the result of His own free will. See Straw (1988), p. 165.

H.3.b.ii *Believers' Freedom*

At *Par.* 3.84 it is implied that faith should be a voluntary act: ἑκούσιον αὐχένα κάμπτων (*bowing his willing neck to unshakeable faith*). This can be paralleled by *Par.* 18.178 καὶ πᾶς ὃς προβέβουλεν ἀληθείης ζυγὸν ἕλκειν (*and whoever prefers to pull the yoke of truth*) where Nonnus uses the Homeric *hapax* προβέβουλεν to describe the deliberate choice to follow the Truth which Christ embodies.[869] The willingness of the action is stressed through the rhetorical figure of *hypallage* (ἑκούσιον αὐχένα) and through the expression προβέβουλεν, which also occurs at *Par.* 12.174. There it is also connected with the ethical-religious, since it describes the attitude of the Jewish leaders who believe in Jesus, but prefer to remain silent rather than risk tarnishing their reputation.[870]

Both *Par.* 3.84 and *Par.* 18.178 reflect the conviction, widespread in the late antique Church, that one should not be coerced into accepting the faith (and into conversion to Christianity). Cyril, John Chrysostom and Augustine are examples of this. In his commentary on Luke, Cyril says that voluntariness of faith is common to all mankind.[871] Chrysostom, in turn, remarks that even God's grace does not anticipate the choice to believe.[872] For Augustine, there is no doubt that *credendi voluntas* comes after consideration of what is to be believed[873] and that no one believes against his will.[874] In fact, the roots of such a conviction are grounded in the Gospels themselves, where to follow Jesus is a deliberate decision. In Mat. 16.24 (cf. Mark 8.34 and Luke 9.23), Jesus demands a self-denying attitude from the disciples, but only from those who really want to follow, εἴ τις θέλει, stressing the voluntary character of discipleship.[875]

Commenting on the words in Mat. 16.24, Chrysostom says emphatically that Jesus makes each of his followers the master of his own choice (κύριον τῆς

869 Livrea (1989), p. 196.

870 *Par.* 12.174–175 πᾶς γὰρ ἀνὴρ προβέβουλε χαμαιγενέων χάριν ἀνδρῶν / ἢ μεγάλου μούνοιο θεοῦ πολυφεγγέα τιμήν (*for every man preferred the grace of earthborn men / to the bright-shining honor of the great and only God*). See Livrea (1989), p. 196.

871 Cyr. *In Luc.* PG 72.792,40 καίτοι προαιρετικὸν ἅπασι τὸ πιστεύειν ἐστί.

872 John Chrys. *In illud: habentes eundem spiritum* PG 51.276,42–44 οὔτε γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς οὔτε ἡ τοῦ Πνεύματος χάρις τὴν ἡμετέραν προφθάνει προαίρεσιν.

873 Aug. *Praed. sanct.* 2.5 PL 44.966 *quis enim non videat, prius esse cogitare quam credere? Nullus quippe credit aliquid, nisi prius cogitaverit esse credendum. Quamvis enim raptim, quamvis celerrime credendi voluntatem quaedam cogitationes antevolent, moxque illa ita sequatur, ut quasi coniunctissima comitetur, necesse est tamen ut omnia quae creduntur, praeveniente cogitatione credantur*. See also A.D. Fitzgerald, J.C. Cavadini, *Augustine through the ages: An encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids 1999), s.v. *Faith*, p. 348.

874 Aug. *In Jo.* 26.2.12 *intrare quisquam ecclesiam potest nolens, accedere ad altare potest nolens, accipere sacramentum potest nolens; credere non potest nisi uolens.*

875 See, for instance, France (2007), p. 638.

ἑαυτοῦ προαιρέσεως).[876] Thus, the voluntary acceptance of faith falls under the notion of προαίρεσις, freedom of choice, first defined by Aristotle.[877] Although the term *proairesis* occurs in earlier Fathers, such as Origen,[878] it became fundamental to Christian thought through the writings of Gregory of Nyssa.[879] Together with αὐτεξουσία and ἐλευθερία, προαίρεσις is the third category which Gregory uses to describe the aspects of man's freedom.[880] For Gregory, the importance of free choice is related to the changeability of human nature. Unlike immutable God, who always wishes what He is and is what He wishes,[881] human beings are subject to constant change and therefore face the need to make decisions.[882] This is precisely why freedom of choice becomes of key importance in human life. For, in spite of mankind's natural disposition to strive after good, *proairesis* may also lead to evil, the existence of which, according to Gregory, should be ascribed to man's misuse of his freedom of choice, as in the case of the first parents, rather than to God.[883] On the other hand, when used in conformity with man's natural disposition, *proairesis* may enable men to approach God in the process of divinisation.[884] Thus, thanks to προαίρεσις, as Gregory remarks in his *Life of Moses*, one may in a sense become ἑαυτοῦ πατήρ.[885]

876 John Chrys. PG 58.541,12.

877 In *Nicomachean Ethics* 1111b–1112a it is stressed that the concept of προαίρεσις is different from that of simple desire or will as it implies the awareness of bad and good that distinguishes rational from irrational beings. This notion is also discussed in *Eudemian Ethics*, where, after drawing the distinction between τὸ ἑκούσιον and τὸ ἀκούσιον (1223a–1223b), it is pointed out that the act of προαίρεσις stems from the intentionality of the choice (1225b–1227b esp. 1226b, 20–25). See also Bobzien (1998), pp. 144, 160 and *passim*.

878 E.g. fr. *Jo* 42.34, 43.7 Preuschen, *Commentary on Matthew* 10.11,39 Girod.

879 For instance, the theme is central in Gregory's *Life of Moses*; e.g., 2.3–6. See Simonetti (1984), p. 273. On the emphasis placed in Late Antiquity on the deliberate choice of the Christian way of life, see R. Lizzi Testa, "Educazione, cultura e cristianesimo in Età Tardo-Antica", in L. Proietti (ed.) *Il mestiere dello storico tra ricerca e impegno civile. Studi in memoria di Maria Cristina Giuntella* (Ariccia 2009), pp. 17–18.

880 Desalvo (1996), p. 117.

881 Greg. Nyss. *Contra Eun.* 3.1,125 Jaeger ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἓν ὢν ἀγαθὸν ἐν ἁπλῇ τε καὶ ἀσυνθέτῳ τῇ φύσει πάντοτε πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ βλέπει καὶ οὐδέποτε ταῖς τῆς προαιρέσεως ὁρμαῖς μεταβάλλεται, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καὶ βούλεται ὅπερ ἐστὶν καὶ ἐστὶ πάντως ὃ καὶ βούλεται (*but God, being One Good, in a single and uncompounded nature, looks ever the same way, and is never changed by the impulse of choice, but always wishes what He is, and is, assuredly, what He wishes*; tr. NPNF 2.5,149).

882 Desalvo (1996), pp. 121–122.

883 Desalvo (1996), pp. 124–125; Mateo Seco and Maspero (2010), p. 648.

884 Mateo Seco and Maspero (2010), p. 648.

885 Greg. Nyss. *Vita Moys.* 2.3 Simonetti.

Central to Gregory's thought, freedom of choice also occupied an important place in the writings of other Fathers of the fourth century, especially in the context of choice between good and evil and of the question of the origin of sin. In this respect, the fourth century Fathers are unanimous in their teaching. Just as in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa, so in those of Athanasius, in the works the two other Cappadocians and in the writings of Chrysostom and Augustine, freedom of choice is understood in a libertarian and non-deterministic sense.[886] Cyril's comment on whether Judas was predestined to betray Jesus makes it clear that this view on freedom of choice continued to be taught into the fifth century. In denying such a possibility, Cyril emphasises Judas' freedom in making decisions.[887]

The matter of a free choice between good and evil is also discussed in the Fathers' comments on John 3.16–21. Referring to the words "these who do not believe are condemned already" (John 3.18), Clement of Alexandria warns against the defilement of conscience and assures that men are plainly responsible for their sins and misdeeds.[888] Commenting on John 3.19, Chrysostom blames those who prefer to choose the darkness instead of the light, for being "too cowardly to undergo the work of virtue for righteousness' sake" and for their decision to continue to do evil.[889] In much the same vein, Apollinaris of Laodicea specifies that it was not lack of a natural ability to do good which made evil those who do not believe in Christ. It was, instead, their free reason clouded by bad habits and passions.[890] In his commentary on John, Cyril first criticises Nicodemus' unwillingness to believe in Jesus' words,[891] after which,

886 Ch.J. Eppling, *A Study of the Patristic Doctrine of Free Will*, Master Thesis, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (2009), pp. 117–118.

887 Cyril, *Jo.* 2.359,14–17 Pusey ἦν γὰρ ἐν ἐκείνῳ τὸ δύνασθαι μὴ διαπεσεῖν, ἑλομένῳ δηλονότι τὰ πρεπωδέστερα, ὅλην τε τὴν ἰδίαν μετατιθέντι διάνοιαν εἰς τὸ χρῆναι γνησίως ἀκολουθῆσαι Χριστῷ (*Judas had the ability not to fall, namely, by making a more fitting choice and by transforming his own mind to become a genuine follower of Christ*).

888 Clem. *Str.* 2.15,69.

889 John Chrys. homily 28 (on John 3.17–21), PG 59.164,12–19 περὶ τῶν αἱρουμένων διαπαντὸς ἐν κακίᾳ μένειν ταῦτα λέγει. Αὐτὸς μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθεν, ἵνα τὰ μὲν πρότερα ἀφῇ ἁμαρτήματα, πρὸς δὲ τὰ μέλλοντα ἀσφαλίσηται. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ τινές εἰσιν οὕτω χαῦνοι καὶ διαλελυμένοι πρὸς τοὺς τῆς ἀρετῆς πόνους, ὡς εἰς ἐσχάτας ἀναπνοὰς βούλεσθαι προσεδρεύειν τῇ πονηρίᾳ, καὶ μηδέποτε αὐτῆς ἀφίστασθαι, τούτους ἐπισκώπτων ἐνταῦθα δηλοῖ (*he was speaking with reference to those who choose to remain altogether in evil. For He Himself came for this reason: to forgive past sins and to afford protection against future sins. Yet, since there are some so weak and slothful in the practice of virtue that they wish to remain in wickedness to their last breath, and never to cease from it, He was plainly ridiculing these men here*).

890 Apoll. fr. *in Jo.* 14.

891 *Jo.* 1.226,23–27 Pusey δυσωπεῖ μὲν γὰρ ἀπειθοῦντα τὸν Νικόδημον, μᾶλλον δὲ ἤδη καὶ ἀσεβοῦντα

turning to the subject of those who love darkness, he then speaks of their freedom to choose between good and evil.[892]

In the section on *Interpretatio*, we looked at selected instances of the *Paraphrase* with regard to the dogmatic and other theological ideas they convey. The passages covered a wide range of Christian issues, including aspects of the Crucifixion, Christological and Mariological topics and other notions. In these, and especially in the presentation of Trinitarian theology, Nonnus' adherence to Nicene dogma is clear throughout. In making additions which clarify, *inter alia*, Mary's virginity and the equality of the persons of the Trinity, Nonnus defends Orthodoxy against heterodoxies, such as mainly Arian ideas (on the inferiority of the Son) and Nestorian teaching (rejection of Θεοτόκος). Nonnus highlights various principles, such as divine nature, pre-existence to the world, consubstantiality and a common share in glory of Father, Son and Spirit and Christ's freedom of will, reflected in the believers' equivalent freedom of choice.

As regards other ideas added by Nonnus relating to Christ's mission, which he expressed in notable imagery, there are, for example, allusions to the Trinity and to Christ's unity of natures. These ideas can be traced in the poetic rendering of Christ's nailing on the Cross and in the depiction of the piercing of the side of the crucified Jesus, which bears Eucharistic overtones. In addition to making use of Cyril, Nonnus also draws for his additions on John Chrysostom (especially on his *Homilies on John*). Nonnus' poetic vocabulary and / or ideas

δεικνύει. Τὸ γὰρ μὴ λίαν ἑτοίμως ἐπὶ τὸ πιστεύειν ἰέναι, Θεοῦ τι διδάσκοντος, τί ἂν ἕτερον εἴη λοιπὸν ἢ τῷ τοῦ ψεύδους ἐγκλήματι περιβαλεῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν (*for he shames the unbelieving Nicodemus, or rather he shows him to be ungodly as well. The failure to come early to believe, even though it is God who is teaching—what else could this be than to cloak the truth with a charge of falsehood?*).

892 *Jo.* 1.230,12–21 Pusey οἱ γὰρ ἐξὸν καταφωτίζεσθαι, φησί, τὸ ἐν σκότῳ κεῖσθαι τιμήσαντες, πῶς οὐκ ἂν εἶεν εἰκότως αὐτοὶ καθ' ἑαυτῶν τῶν δεινῶν ὁρισταὶ καὶ αὐτόμολοι πρὸς τὸ παθεῖν ἃ καὶ διαφεύγειν ἐξῆν, εἴπερ ἦσαν ὀρθοὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐξετασταί, τὸ φωτίζεσθαι μᾶλλον ἐθέλειν τοῦ μὴ τοιούτου προκρίνοντες, καὶ τῶν ἀμεινόνων δεύτερα ποιεῖσθαι μελετῶντες τὰ αἰσχίονα; Ἐλευθέραν δὲ πάλιν τῶν ἐξ ἀνάγκης δεσμῶν τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου διετήρησε γνώμην, καὶ ῥοπαῖς οἰκείαις ἐπ' ἄμφω βαδίζουσαν, ἵνα δέχηται δικαίως ἔπαινόν τε τὸν ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖς, καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις κόλασιν (*after all, those who prefer to remain in darkness, he says, when it is in their power to be enlightened—how would they not reasonably be the ones who determine that dreadful consequences should happen to them? How would it not be their own choice to suffer sorrows which they could avoid if they would only examine matters correctly, preferring to be enlightened rather than not, and taking care to consider baser matters secondary to more noble matters? Again, he keeps the human mind free from the bonds of necessity. By its own inclinations it tends toward both sides, so that it may receive praise for the good and punishment for the opposite*).

also share common features with passages of Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius, Basil the Great, Epiphanius of Salamis, *inter alios*, which can be regarded as forming a part of the poet's deeply knowledgeable theological background.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions

In this study, we have offered the reader a comprehensive overview of the numerous strategies employed by Nonnus in his elaboration of the Fourth Gospel, taking into account the impressively wide range of rhetorical devices and, on a secondary level, the diverse intertextual implications involved in this multileveled process. After an introductory account on the ancient rhetorical background of Nonnus' work, we have demonstrated that, in rephrasing the Gospel, the poet most usually employs amplificatory modes of paraphrasing or, much less often, non-amplificatory modes of paraphrasing. This second technique includes literal paraphrase, abbreviations and conflations and transpositions. These techniques do not lengthen the model, while the first technique consists of a number of ways of rephrasing and re-elaboration by means of which the model is expanded. In our analysis of Nonnus' use of amplification, we started from the simpler modes, which mainly involve extension through additions of words (such as periphrastic and synonymic amplification and instances of *anaphora*) and we proceeded to the examination of the more ambitious and elaborate techniques of expansion. Focussing on the gradual complexity of the modes employed, we first looked at the explanations of foreign terms, which reveal both geographical, ethnological and other encyclopaedic interests and awareness of theological issues. We then moved on to the investigation of Nonnus' development of imagery and his infusing of the scenes he describes with a sense of theatricality, his treatment of the persons' speeches and his character sketching and, finally, his handling of the actual theological exegesis.

Our approach attempts to show that Nonnus' debt to Classical rhetoric and its principles is balanced by his exegetical endeavours. Thus we demonstrate that in all of Nonnus' amplificatory techniques, the scriptural and other theological background is almost omnipresent, in parallel to the other parameters involved in Nonnus' rewriting, such as visual and acoustic effects in the description, the elaboration of psychological and intellectual traits of people involved and so on, although all these may involve merely the addition of one or two words (as is the case, for instance, with the adjective ἄφθιτος for the Bread of Life at *Par.* 6.147 and 173). We bear this aspect constantly in mind in our examination of these various amplificatory modes, from the simplest to the most sophisticated (culminating to the portrayal of landscape and people and to the accounts of the persons' exchanges). However, in the final section (*Interpretatio*) we examine instances in which religious exegesis is given particular weight

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and is heard repeatedly and intensively in the vocabulary of the rephrasing of the passages we examine. Nonnus' rephrasing echoes theological controversies and discussions current shortly before the composition of the poem.

The exegetical comments in all the amplificatory techniques we examine in our study are mainly, though not exclusively, derived either from information contained in other Biblical texts, such as the Old Testament, Synoptics or the *Acts*, or from commentaries on John by John Chrysostom and, above all, by Cyril, whose work forms the basic theological background for Nonnus' reworking. Although this observation regarding Nonnus' Christian sources is not new in Nonnian studies, we discuss numerous passages from the point of view of the rhetorical, intertextual and theological implications involved in a systematised scheme of representative instances arranged into thematic units for the first time. We also point out hitherto unrecognised cases of influence from Cyril, Chrysostom and others.

All in all, as has been already argued with regard to Christian exegetical texts and commentaries, the rhetorical techniques themselves and the purely philological inquiry of Late Antiquity do encompass the exegetical element, both in and outside a religious context. Since any philological interpretation deals with matters of vocabulary, historical details and *realia*, *inter alia*, a re-elaboration of a Biblical text, such as the work of Nonnus, is in any case exegetical whenever it expands upon some idea or image, whether or not the writer does this from a Christian point of view, as is the case when the author offers linguistic, ethnological and other comments. Thus, the distance between pagan rhetorical tradition and Christian written tradition as factors of influence on the epic Bible poets, in general, and Nonnus, in particular, is small indeed. In addition to being a poet, Nonnus is both a philological and a Christian exegete and conscientiously functions on both levels, which to him are probably not distinct from one another.

Our analysis has demonstrated that Nonnus' paraphrase technique centres mainly on expansion of the Gospel. On the relatively few occasions in which he chooses to stick to the Johannine diction and opt for a literal paraphrase, he seems to do so either for the sake of clarity or in order to retain certain phrases that he evidently thinks are particularly effective. When he resorts to the conflation or abbreviation of his model, this he does mostly to avoid repetition and he uses a wide variety of means to shorten the *Vorlage*. Only seldom does Nonnus use transpositions and these do not drastically subvert the order of the events as narrated in the Gospel. The point of such transitions is to offer a more coherent account of the facts or perhaps to emphasise a particular idea. *Amplificatio*, which Nonnus uses widely, includes a variety of rhetorical tools. It is accomplished mainly by the accumulation of synonyms created through the

addition of verbs, nouns, adjectives and participles, and the insertion of independent poetic images or exegetic sections. The custom of inserting explanations of foreign terms or borrowings, which is typical of the paraphrastic / metaphrastic technique, is didactic in function. It also evidence for Nonnus' literary taste and was a means of legitimising the presence of terms that a high linguistic register would otherwise have regarded as barbarisms.

Nonnus' descriptive passages, which create short *ekphrases*, often contain vivid images and are rich in visual details. Here his rhetorical training is clearly at work, for in these instances Nonnus employs *enargeia*, a form of clarity that helps the reader to visualise a scene, or even a concept, through the provision of pictorial details that often endow descriptions with a theatrical touch. In similar fashion, another rhetorical technique adopted by Nonnus to expand on his model involves the psychological or moral characterisation of the protagonists concerned. We have observed that in many cases Nonnus constructs his characters with remarkable freedom. His sketches offer a complex portrayal of their inner motivation or attitudes, more subtle than that on display in the Gospel, which he achieves through application of the rhetorical principle of *ethopoea*. Such depictions also reveal elements of *enargeia*, which is, of course, to a certain extent, inherent in *ethopoea* and whose function is to create memorable images that have a powerful impact on the audience. Although Nonnus almost always respects the structure of his model, even in terms of dialogues and changes of speakers, in his treatment of direct speech and dialogue he frequently uses gestures or vivid details to portray his characters. This enhances the amplification of his model, which Nonnus also achieves through combining a variety of paraphrasic techniques, such as accumulation of synonyms, incorporation of rhetorical devices or elements of *interpretatio*.

However, the most significant element in Nonnus' expansion of Johannine diction is *interpretatio*, which employs exegetical insertions to contribute enormously to the transformation of the hypotext. Such insertions consist mainly of theological additions and explanations which Nonnus inserts in order to clarify the meaning of the Gospel text. This implies a thorough knowledge of Christian literature and theology and a familiarity with all the principal issues informing contemporary debate. Particularly when Nonnus is illustrating theological concepts, it is apparent that his insertions, in addition to being influenced by Cyril's commentary, are also deeply grounded in the Christian Patristic tradition and other later sources and rest on doctrines established by the Ecumenical Councils. Our analysis has shown, for example, that Nonnus incorporated principles derived from discussions on the cult of Mary and from Christological discussions relating to Trinitarian theology. In all these and other instances, Nonnus' rephrasing is basically consonant with Nicene

Orthodoxy. The didactic function of the *Paraphrase* becomes even more evident in the passages containing theological inclusions. The aim of these is to elucidate the Fourth Gospel, but also to rebut heretical views, such as, in particular, Arianism and Nestorianism and various heterodoxies concerning the virginity of the mother of Christ.

As usually occurs in all the commentaries and other studies on the *Paraphrase* produced so far, we, too, have found regular instances of similarity or identity of phrasing and correspondence of motifs between the *Paraphrase* and the *Dionysiaca*. From our discussion it has become clear, we hope, that Nonnus generally uses the same phraseology to give shape to both pagan concepts and images and to Christian ideas, so that the same wording serves quite different purposes in each case. Typical of this is Nonnus' use of the *type* terminology, which is used in two quite different fashions in the *Dionysiaca* and in the *Paraphrase*, in which it is aligned with the exegetical tradition of the τύπος nexus of connotations. Frequently, adjectives and other descriptive terms applied to various deities and to Dionysus himself in the *Dionysiaca* are used of Christ in the *Paraphrase* and there is also a correspondence between descriptions of acts involving Dionysus and acts involving Christ, such as, for instance, details in the narratives of Dionysus' and Christ's arrest. The magnificence of divinity is depicted similarly in the two poems, as they are both constructed around a divine character who is ultimately triumphant. Such observations do not offer any new conclusions regarding the discussion on the relative dating of the two woks (for which see the relevant section of *1. Introduction*). Rather, they add a few more instances of comparability or contrast between the two poems of different conception, drawing attention to certain common motifs and principles of dynamics built around the main character, while also underlining the notable ease with which Nonnus adjusts significant vocabulary either to a Christian or to a pagan context, as appropriate.

Although we have grouped the different paraphrastic methods in separate categories, our analysis clearly proves that Nonnus, rather than mechanically applying a set of rules and theories, skilfully combines their elements together and adds a good deal of imagination and zeal for a distinct poetic articulation. The *Paraphrase* stands out as a (or, probably, *the* most) typical product of Christian Greek paraphrastic poetry in which rhetorical theory, late antique artistic taste and principles, theological knowledge and a personal poetic voice collaborate to create a work which conveys complex concepts through an equally complex form. Thus, the poem is addressed to an audience that is expected to appreciate the full extent of its multiple aesthetic and didactic parameters. Investigation of the only other surviving Greek Biblical paraphrase, the so far relatively neglected *Metaphrasis* of the Psalms, and a comparison of the *Para-*

phrase with the *Metaphrasis* would increase our knowledge and insights into the genre. Such a study would shed yet further light on how late antique poets use Homericising vocabulary and style and classical rhetorical techniques to rewrite a Biblical text and to fuse pagan literary tradition with the Christian doctrine and values, in a process that prefigures similar Byzantine practices.

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The Bibliography lists studies mentioned more than once in the book.

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AW	see *Editions* (*Other Authors*), Opitz et al.
Gr. Gr.	R. Schneider et al., *Grammatici Graeci*, 4 vols. (Leipzig 1867–1910, repr. Hildesheim 1965)
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon. Ninth Edition with Revised Supplement* (Oxford 1996)
NPNF	see *Translations*, Schaff and Wace
PG	see *Editions* (*Other Authors*), Migne 1857–1866
PL	see *Editions* (*Other Authors*), Migne 1844–1865

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Appendix: Figures

FIGURE 1 Arian Baptistery, ceiling mosaic, Ravenna (fifth or sixth ceentury), Italy
PHOTO: PETAR MILOŠEVIĆ / CC BY-SA

FIGURE 2 Paris. Gr. 115, f. 93 v (tenth or eleventh century)
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FIGURE 3 Entry of Christ into Jerusalem, Rossano Gospels (sixth century), (*Ingresso di Gesù a Gerusalemme*) Tav. II, Codex Purpureus Rossanensis, Museo Diocesano e del Codex Rossano, Corigliano-Rossano, Italy
WITH KIND PERMISSION OF MUSEO DIOCESANO AND CODEX ARCIDIOCESI DI ROSSANO-CARIATI

FIGURE 4 Throne of Archbishop Maximian: panel detail, Entry of Christ into Jerusalem (sixth century). Museo Arcivescovale, Ravenna, Italy
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